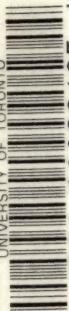


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 00626105 1













STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

ANCIENT AND MODERN.



~~Plates. 4~~  
~~8865s~~

# STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

ANCIENT AND MODERN

*William Leonard*  
BY  
W. L. COURTNEY, M.A.

FELLOW OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD

AUTHOR OF 'THE METAPHYSICS OF JOHN STUART MILL.'

RIVINGTONS  
WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON

MDCCCLXXXII



B  
29  
C68

$$\begin{array}{r} 22650 \\ \hline 214192 \end{array}$$

## P R E F A C E.

Two of the Essays included in this volume have appeared before. The one entitled "The New Psychology," was published in the *Fortnightly Review*; "Epicurus" formed one of the essays in *Hellenica*, edited by Mr. Evelyn Abbott. The others, though written at different times, are now published for the first time.

It is probably useless to profess complete consistency of standpoint in a collection of papers which deal with such different subjects and refer to such different periods in the history of Philosophy. But the one common feature which runs through them is intended to be a vindication of the Kantian standpoint, as against popular English Philosophy on the one side, and later German Metaphysics on the other. And in Kant himself the preference is given to the Critique of Pure Reason rather than to the two Critiques of Practical Reason and the Faculty of Judgment. It

is the two latter treatises which have given rise to the systems of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, with all their imposing structure of Transcendentalism.

The main question which a modern metaphysician must solve appears to me to be this. Assuming that the chief interest of Philosophy is to determine the meaning and content of "Consciousness," the question is whether the Ego of man is, in its fundamental essence, a thinking or an acting power. If it is essentially an acting power, then I can understand (despite of Hegel's professed inability to do so) the supremacy, the unlimitedness, the freedom of the Ego, exhibited, as for instance Kant exhibits it, in Morality and the reality of a Moral Law. I can then also understand its independence of experience, of the physical world of nature. But if the Ego be essentially a thinking power, then it seems to me to be necessarily limited, conditioned, not free. To think is, in more senses than one, to limit and to be limited, to determine and to be determined; and a thinking reason is dependent on conditions which may justly be described as foreign to itself. But to say that the Ego, as a thinking power, is absolute, to deliver the theoretical reason from all bondage to the Non-Ego, appears to me to savour of that *Schwärmerei* which is so fatal a tendency in metaphysical systems. If it

be said that the Ego is both a thinking power and an acting power, the conflicting relations of the two have to be solved, and the original question reappears.

To the English school of thought, as I understand it, the content of "Consciousness" is not a main philosophical interest, but rather the supposed evolution of man's essence from material conditions, the explanation of consciousness from the side of non-consciousness,—involving, in most cases, the denial that the Ego is a power at all. But how the scientific school of thinkers are able to explain away the metaphysical difficulty, I find myself unable to comprehend.

That these studies are but slight contributions to the subject, and that they are critical rather than constructive, are facts of which I am only too conscious. But it is impossible to construct on insufficient data. "To fly to the highest universals" is indeed a common philosophical device, even since the time of Bacon, for those who demand Philosophy "aus einem Stück;" but it argues a sanguine optimism which, I confess, I do not see to be warranted by the present condition of metaphysics. And perhaps after Hegel's dialectic of the Idea, Comte's *Philosophie Positive*, and Herbert Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy*, we have had enough "construction" to last our time.





# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. ANCIENT IDEALISM—PARMENIDES, . . . . .	1
APPENDIX, . . . . .	23
II. ANCIENT HEDONISM—EPICURUS, . . . . .	26
III. THE FAILURE OF BERKELEY'S IDEALISM, . . . . .	55
IV. A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORD "CAUSE," . . . . .	75
V. THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY,. . . . .	95
VI. THE NEW ETHICS,. . . . .	115
VII. "BACK TO KANT," . . . . .	135
VIII. KANT AS A LOGICIAN AND AS A MORALIST, . . . . .	164
IX. A PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION,. . . . .	185



# I.

## ANCIENT IDEALISM—PARMENIDES.

~~Τὸν τὸν δ' ἐστὶ νοεῖν τε καὶ οὐνεκεν ἐστὶ νόημα,~~  
 “Thought and the object of thought are one and the same”—so runs the celebrated line of the earliest of Greek Idealists. It is absolutely the first hint of the metaphysician’s analysis of Reality which we find in Hellenic philosophy. It transports us into quite another region of thought from that with which the wise men of Ionia were familiar, just as the local circumstances of the school in which it originated transport us from the Ægean to the Adriatic. † What the precise meaning of the line may be, what consequences it involves, what view it presupposes of the relations between Sense and Intellect, are all disputed points: the one thing certain is that it came into Greek philosophy from the west rather than from the east, from Magna Græcia instead of Greece proper; while the sentence itself appears sufficient to stamp its author, Parmenides, as the earliest of the metaphysicians. †

Of Parmenides himself Plato gives us a slight picture, which is unfortunately marred by the doubt whether Parmenides was ever in Athens at all, or whether his companionship with Zeno (who certainly was there) is not part of Plato’s dramatic procedure. “Antiphon stated, on

the authority of Pythodorus, that Zeno and Parmenides once came to the greater Panathenæa, Parmenides being at that time quite an old man with grey hair and a handsome and noble countenance, and certainly not over sixty-five years of age : Zeno, about forty years old, tall and good-looking, whom report declared to have been Parmenides' favourite. He mentioned also that they put up at the house of Pythodorus in the Kerameikos, outside the city-walls, and that Socrates and many other persons visited them there, desiring to hear Zeno read his productions, which had then been brought by them for the first time, and that Socrates was then a very young man."<sup>1</sup> If Socrates was fifteen, this would give us 454 B.C. as the date of the meeting, and 519 as the date of the birth of Parmenides. If Socrates was, as indeed from the style of his conversation is more likely, twenty years of age, the meeting would have taken place in 449, and Parmenides would have been born in 514.<sup>2</sup> But it is no good arguing from such insufficient data. The admiration of Plato, however, for the Eleatic was deep and sincere : ὁ μέγας, αἰδοῖός τε ἅμα δεινός τε, ἐφάνη βάθος τι ἔχειν παντάπασιν γενναῖον<sup>3</sup>—such are his words of ungrudging encomium ; for Parmenides, together with Socrates and Heracleitus, was a contributing element to his own doctrine of Ideas.

The early systems of philosophy in Greece, the Ionian, the Pythagorean, and the Eleatic, fall into a natural order of development, as successive attempts to discover

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Parm.* 127 B ; cf. *Sophist.* 217 C, and *Theætet.* 183 E.

<sup>2</sup> Diogenes Laertius says that he "flourished" about the sixty-ninth Olympiad (B.C. 504-501) ; but this hardly agrees with Plato's chronology.

<sup>3</sup> Plato, *Soph.* 237 A. ; *Theæt.* 183 E. ; cf. Arist. *Metaph.* i. 5.

the essential element of the world. For the first problem which Philosophy assailed was a purely objective one: its first question related to the original principle, the essence, the inner reality of Nature. How shall we describe nature in its most intimate essence? Into what original principle (*στοιχείον*) can we reduce the manifold shapes and forms of the world? What is the reality as distinguished from the appearances of things? To these questions the Ionian philosophers gave crudely superficial answers. They took any one of the supposed permanent elements of Matter, according to the analogies or fancies which the most primitive inquiry could afford, and declared it to be the original element. The first element is water, said Thales; it is air, said Anaximenes; it is fire, said Heracleitus; it is some infinite mixture of things (*τὸ ἄπειρον*), said Anaximander. But the process of analytic inquiry could not but be dissatisfied with such primitive attempts at definition. The reality of Nature could not be merely one of its fixed and complex shapes: it must be something more abstract, more remote from sensuous presentation. What principle then can we find of universal applicability to Nature, which should appeal, not to the senses of man, but to his thought? Is there anything which belongs more universally to things than the relations, and the laws which, as it were, hold them together, and which constitute the fixed order or framework of Nature? And can we find any key to these relations or laws except Number—Number, which explains Harmony, which unlocks the secrets of Astronomy, which lies at the base of the earliest of the sciences, Mathematics?



Number, at all events, is the great principle of things, according to the Pythagoreans, who were at once mathematicians, astronomers, and musicians. Φαίνονται δὴ καὶ οὗτοι (sc. οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι), says Aristotle,<sup>1</sup> τὸν ἀριθμὸν νομίζοντες ἀρχὴν εἶναι καὶ ὥς ὕλην τοῖς οὐσι. Number was the fountain-head, and, as it were, the matter of things.

But scientific analysis cannot stop here. Number is indeed an abstraction, but to the Pythagorean, at all events, it was an abstraction of sense. It was regarded almost as something corporeal, with material embodiments of its own, and appealed to sense, and to sense only. But in order to arrive at the reality of things we ought to pierce below the obvious, superficial appearances, to discard the verdict of sensuous perception, and envisage the first principle by thought alone. How shall we describe this most abstract essence, cognoscible only by thought? Here we reach the position of the Eleatic school, with its four names of Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, and Melissus. To them the Real could only be described in vague terms, because of its very abstractness and essentiality. In the first place, it was clearly a Unity, for Multiplicity belonged to the sensible forms of things, not to their intelligible essence: things *appeared* to be many, in reality they were one. In the second place, if apprehended by the religious instinct, the Unity might be called God; if apprehended metaphysically it could only be called Being in the abstract, τὸ ὄν. Of the two founders of the Eleatic school, the theologian was Xenophanes, the meta-

<sup>1</sup> Arist. *Metaph.* i. 5.

physician was Parmenides. Thus, if we look back over the course along which Philosophy travelled from Parmenides to Thales, we find that the answers returned to the original problem have become increasingly abstract. First, Nature is resolved into some corporeal thing—water, or air, or fire; then it is resolved into mathematical relations, finally into a purely intelligible essence. Just as Plato, in his celebrated diagram in the sixth book of the Republic, framed an ascending scale of truth and reality from sensible things through mathematical abstractions to the Ideas of Reason, so too, the course of Greek speculation proceeded from the Ionic physical school through the Pythagoreans to the Eleatics. The first home of Greek philosophy is the coast-line of Asia Minor; the second is the Greek colonies along the southern shores of Italy: only after the arrival of Zeno to Athens do the two streams of thought tend to amalgamate and produce the later line of physical inquirers, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and Democritus.<sup>1</sup>

The two main characteristics of the Eleatic school we have found to be, first, the denial of multiplicity,

<sup>1</sup> According to a wild theory of Gladisch, the Pythagoreans borrowed their theory from the Chinese, Heracleitus's doctrine came from the Persians, Empedocles's from the Egyptians, Anaxagoras's from the Jews, and Parmenides's from the Hindoos.—Cf. Gladisch, *Einleitung in das Verständniss der Weltgeschichte*, 2 Th. 1841-1844. It is in the highest degree improbable that the Eleatics borrowed from any Eastern source; but there is still a similarity between some of the lines of the Parmenidean poem and one of the hymns in the tenth book of the Rig-Veda—

“There was not death, hence there was naught immortal,  
There was no confine betwixt day and night;  
The only ONE breathed breathless in itself,  
Other than it there nothing since has been.”

Max Müller's *Hist. of Ancient Sanskrit Lit.*, p. 546.

second, the untrustworthiness of Sense : for multiplicity is mere appearance ; the senses give us multiplicity ; therefore the senses are untrustworthy : or, to put it in other words, the Real is one Being, not manifold Becoming ; the essence of the natural world can only be found in one stable and permanent being, which does not change, or vary, or become, but ever is. These are the points on which Parmenides lays stress in his poem which bears the usual title *περὶ φύσεως*. The poem itself appears to have consisted of two main divisions, *τὰ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν* and *τὰ πρὸς δόξαν*, or *βροτῶν δόξαι*, preceded by an allegorical introduction or proem. About 162 verses remain :<sup>1</sup> 42 belong to the proem, 70 to the first division on Truth ; the last portion, originally much greater, is now only represented by 43 verses. The fragments are found mainly in Sextus Empiricus and Simplicius, with one or two verses preserved by Proclus and Plato.<sup>2</sup>

The introduction is allegorical, and describes the manner in which the Goddess (Themis or Sophia) revealed to the poet the secrets of things. "I was borne," he tells us, "in a chariot, and escorted by the daughters of Helios thither, where are the gates of the paths of the Day and the Night—gates which are guarded by Justice, the mighty avenger.

<sup>1</sup> The lines are harsh and unmusical. Cicero, at all events, did not regard them very favourably. Cf. *Cic. Acad.*, ii. 23, 74 ; *Procl. in Parm.* iv. 62.

<sup>2</sup> The fragments have been edited by Brandis (1813), Karsten (1835), Mullach (1845), and Stein (1864-7). I have followed the arrangement of Stein in *Symb. Philol. Bonnensium in hon. Fr. Ritsch. coll.*, Leipsic. A metrical translation (following Mullach), by Th. Davidson, may be found in *Journal of Spec. Phil.*, vol. iv., St. Louis.

Persuaded by my virgin escort, Justice rolled back the portal. And the goddess herself received me with kindly welcome, and took my right hand in her own, and uttered words of good cheer. ‘Youth, that art mated with immortal charioteers, I bid thee hail. It is no evil lot that has borne thee hither, so far from the common path of mortals, but Justice and Right. Thou needst must know all things, both the fearless heart of assured truth, and the common notions of mankind, wherein is no true conviction. But nevertheless (albeit there is no truth in men’s opinions) thou shalt learn this also, that he who would fain explore all things must essay as well the things which merely seem to be. Neither let the habit of much experience compel thee, while treading this pathway, to employ an eye that seeth not, and an ear full of ringing; no, nor a clamorous tongue; but thou must test by reason the much-vext demonstration of things, which I shall tell thee of;—with steadfast mind regard the absent and the present, for never shalt thou sever existence from Being, whether it be scattered abroad throughout the world or gathered together. And it is indifferent to me whence I begin, for thither shall I return again.’” Here the introduction ends, and we commence the first division of the inquiry into the truth. Parmenides makes his goddess, while affirming that there is but one truth, viz., that Being is, warn him against two errors, first, the error that there is such a thing as non-Being at all; secondly, that Being and non-Being are one and the same. The second is a clear and unmistakable reference to the doctrine of Heracleitus;



the importance of the first of Parmenides's so-called "errors," we shall see hereafter in relation to the general meaning of his doctrine. The goddess begins—

"Come now and I will tell thee, and do thou ponder, when thou hast heard, which be the only paths of inquiry open to thought. One path is that Being is, and non-Being is not; this is the way of conviction, for Truth follows close thereto. The other is that Being is not, and that there needs must be non-Being, that I tell thee is an all-incredible path. For neither canst thou know non-Being (for it is unapproachable), nor canst thou give it expression, for Thinking and Being are the same. Thou must both say and know that Being is, for is is of Being, and non-Being is nothing: this I bid thee ponder. It is from this path first that thou must keep thy thought; and next from this too, on which mortals knowing nothing wander in vacillation, because perplexity in their hearts directs their uncertain mind, and they are borne, deaf and dumb and blind, fools, unreasonable cattle, who are wont to think that Being and non-Being are one and the same, and yet not the same; and the path of all things returns to itself again.<sup>1</sup> Never can it be forced us to believe that Being is not, so keep thyself from this path of inquiry."

Various predicates and attributes of Being are then detailed in the following lines:—

"Of one path alone then the discussion remains,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heraclit. Fr. 72, ποταμοῖς τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἐμβαίνομέν τε καὶ οὐκ ἐμβαίνομεν, εἰμέν τε καὶ οὐκ εἰμέν.

Arist. *Metaph.* 3, p. 1005, 23, ἀδύνατον γὰρ ὄντινόν τι αὐτὸν ὑπολαμβάνειν εἶναι καὶ μὴ εἶναι καθάπερ τινὲς οἴονται λέγειν Ἡράκλειτον.



viz., that Being <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~. And for this there are many tokens to prove that Being is birthless <sup>and</sup> deathless, whole <sup>and</sup> only-begotten, and unmoved <sup>and</sup> unending. It never *was*, it never *will be*, since it is a universal *now*, one and continuous. For what birth shalt thou find for it? How and whence hath it gained increase? I will not let thee say or think that it came from non-Being, for it can neither be said nor thought how *Not is* becomes *Is*. What need can have stirred it, earlier or later, to issue and grow from non-Being? Thus Being must either wholly <sup>be</sup>, or wholly not be. Nor yet will the force of conviction suffer that from Being there should grow anything other than itself. Wherefore, Justice relaxes not its fetters to let it either have become or perish, but holds it fast.<sup>1</sup> Either then there is Being or non-Being. Now it hath been of necessity determined that of these the one path is incomprehensible and nameless (for it is no true pathway at all), but the other both exists and is true. How could that which is, either cease to be or become? If it *became* it is not, nor yet *is* it if it *will be* hereafter. Thus generation is utterly quenched, and destruction is incredible.

“Nor is it divisible, since it is all alike; nor is there void in it which could prevent it from holding together; nor is there aught inferior in it, for it is all fulfilled with being; wherefore it is all continuous, for being is ever close to being. Moreover it is motionless within the limits of mighty chains, birthless, deathless, since

<sup>1</sup> The dilemma is:—If Being had birth, it must have come either from non-Being or from Being. It cannot have come from something contradictory of itself, viz., non-Being; nor yet can it be said to *become* what it already *is*. Therefore it was never born and will never die.

birth and death have wandered afar, and true conviction hath banished them. Same and abiding in the same, it lieth ever in itself. Thus steadfast it endureth, for masterful necessity holdeth it in the chains of that boundary which limits it round. Wherefore it is right that Being should be not limitless or infinite:<sup>1</sup> for being is not lacking in aught; if it were not, it would lack everything."

We come now to the celebrated utterance of Parmenides. If everything belongs to Being, Thought must also belong to Being, or rather, Thought and Being must be the same. He expresses it thus:—

"One and the same is Thought and that to which Thought is directed. (Thought and the object of Thought are the same thing; or thinking is the same thing as that 'ens unum' which alone can be thought.) For not apart from Being, in which it is expressed, will you find thinking.<sup>2</sup> Naught is or shall be, other or beside the existent; since Fate hath enchained it so as to be whole and motionless. Wherefore they are but an (idle) name, all those things which mortals have set up for themselves, believing them to be true,—birth and death, being and ceasing, movement in space and change of bright colour.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Being is a final and completed limit of things,

<sup>1</sup> Melissus held that the one was infinite; Parmenides held that it was finite: cf. Arist. *Metaph.*, 1. 5. The argument of Parmenides seems to be, if Being is, it must be free from deficiency, therefore it is perfect: if perfect, it has an end, and is not endless: therefore it is not infinite.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Parmenides condescends to an anagram, εὖν reversed makes νοε[ν], and this is perhaps expressed by the word πεφασισμένον. Cf. Stein *in loc.*

<sup>3</sup> This was negatively proved by the dialectic of Zeno, who showed what absurdities were involved in the ordinary ideas of plurality, change, motion, and space. Cf. Plato, *Parmen.* 128, A, B.

like to the bulk of a sphere well rounded every way, from centre to circumference everywhere equal, for there must needs be no part greater, no part smaller, on this side or that; there is no non-Being which could prevent it from coming into equality, and there is no Being, which could be here more, there less, than Being,<sup>1</sup> since it is without taint or flaw. Verily it lieth within its limits, everywhere equal alike."

Here the first part of Parmenides's poem ends. In the second part (*τὰ πρὸς δόξαν*) he gives what he terms "a treacherous array of words" (*κόσμον ἐμῶν ἐπέων ἀπατηλόν*) on the ordinary notions of mortals. It is in reality a fanciful cosmogony, based on the opposite notions of fire and night, light and darkness, which he seems to identify with being and non-being. It appears to be intended as a sort of burlesque or satire of the cosmogonies of those physicists who had the ear of Greece. The whole of their pretended physics was a sham; in reality, there was nothing but "ens unum continuum," one inviolate Being, with which thought was identical.

"Thought and the object of thought are identical,"—it is a suggestive phrase. Have we here a Cartesian dogma of the equivalence of Thinking and Being, to serve as an effectual weapon against the Sceptics and Pyrrhonists? Is this an ancient protest against the doctrine of the Relativity of Knowledge and an early affirmation of the Absolutist principle? Is Parmenides an intellectual ancestor of Spinoza, with his twin attributes,

<sup>1</sup> There is no non-Being interposed (like the void of Democritus) which could prevent it from being always equal to itself; and there is no Being added which could make it here greater, there less, than itself.



Thought and Extension, of the one identical substance, God? Or shall we content ourselves with repeating the dry criticism of Ueberweg, that Parmenides mistakes the distinction between the subjective being of thought and an objective realm to which thought is directed, by confining his attention only to the fact that both are subjects of the predicate 'being'? We must naturally be careful how far we modernise Parmenides; and yet without some reading between the lines of the fragments of antiquity, there can be for us no interest, whether historical or philosophical. Can we interpret the Parmenidean dogma of the finding the world's principle (*στοιχείον*) in "Being" in any rational and instructive fashion?

It is clear that the philosophical analysis of our knowledge of existence is an attempt in exactly an opposite direction to the course which the mind goes through in acquiring its knowledge. After a great body of knowledge has been amassed, the philosophic impulse seeks to retrace the almost unconscious steps, and to arrive at the simplest element. Its effort is to find the origin of knowledge. What then is, in the first place, the process of acquiring knowledge?

I hold in my hand a book. I say it *is* a book—a statement, which conveys some information of a certain vague and indeterminate sort, for I am including among the things which exist a something to which I am attaching a class name. But the extent of the information is clearly limited. I proceed further to say that it is a philosophical book. Here is a very substantive addition, which serves to distinguish my book from novels, auto-

biographies, and works of travel. Let me add other features. It is a book on the history of Philosophy; it is then critical and not constructive. It is a book written in German; it therefore could not have emanated from Maurice or G. H. Lewes. It is by Dr. Friedrich Ueberweg: it comes, consequently, from the chair of philosophy in the University of Königsberg. When I have said as much as this, it may be presumed that I have defined its position with something like accuracy. If we may be allowed to generalise the process in this instance, we shall say that the course of the acquisition of knowledge is one from the abstract to the concrete, from the minimum of determination to the maximum of determination.

And now what is the process of philosophical analysis? The object being to arrive at successively simpler determinations of my knowledge, I ask (again availing myself of the same instance), What is common to this particular book and to others? what is the simplest element which makes a thing a book? The first answer, perhaps, is "a substance:" books may vary according to their subjects, but all have a certain substance of their own—a substance which is permanent, while its qualities and determinations change. How can we describe this substance? It is something hard and square, or flexible and oblong, or brown and dull, or green and lively. But all these descriptions are clearly attributes, the whole reality of which consists in the mind which affixes them. Without the perceiving and discriminating mind, they are nothing. And if we eliminate the qualities as belonging in reality not to the external thing, but to

the perceiving mind, "substance" disappears also : there is nothing left of it, when its qualities are subtracted. Substance would seem to be nothing but its qualities.

The ultimate "principle," the original *στοιχείον* of the book is, then, not a substance. Where is the *στοιχείον* to be found ? Shall it be found in this—that we say that the book "is"—that we apply the category of "being" to it ? Is "being" the only true reality ? So at least Parmenides thought ; for if we generalise from one single instance to the whole body of our knowledge, he would have us say that the ultimate reality of a thing is that it is included in the category of "being."

The analysis, however, cannot stop here. "Is" is the form of predication, and we seem to have found that the reality of things is the permanency of the form of predication. But why is the form of predication permanent ? Because predication is a form of thinking, and the mind is present in all the ingathering of knowledge. It is because the mind is constant, a fixed, permanent element in all knowledge, that we can say that *ἔστι* is the <sup>principle</sup> *στοιχείον* of things. Or, in other words, if we wish to discover what is the simplest element in all experience, what the one permanent thing is, we find it to be the constant presence of the thinking mind. An external object varies according to its different relations to other objects : it may be said to change, to differ, to become. But the mind does not change ; and its permanence is expressed in that predication, by which we say a thing "is,"—*ἔστι*.

That Parmenides said as much as this, is more than the boldest of unhistorical metaphysicians would dare

to affirm. That he came near to saying it, is at least an arguable position, which may, perhaps, lend a new interest to the "father" on whom Plato hesitated to lay hands. It is therefore necessary to see in what points the Eleatic philosopher failed to arrive at the position of Idealism; and for this purpose, we can avail ourselves to some extent of Plato's guidance in the dialogue called *Parmenides*. In that masterpiece of dialectical skill, we have not only a criticism by Parmenides of the Platonic ideas, but also here and there keen thrusts into the Eleatic armour itself.

The first of these is put into the mouth of Socrates, and is addressed to Parmenides's friend and successor, Zeno. "If a person shows that such things as wood, stones, and the like, being many, are also one, we admit that he shows the co-existence of the one and many, but he does not show that the many are one or the one many: he is uttering not a paradox but a truism. If, however, taking the simple notions of like, unlike, one, many, rest, motion, and similar ideas, we could show that these, in their abstract form (*αὐτὰ καθ' αὐτὰ τὰ εἶδη*) admit of admixture and separation, I should be very much astonished. This part of the argument appears to be treated by you, Zeno, in a very spirited manner; nevertheless, as I was saying, I should be far more amazed if any one found in the ideas themselves which are apprehended by reason (*ἐν αὐτοῖς τοῖς εἶδεσι . . . ἐν τοῖς λογισμῶ λαμβανομένοις*) the same puzzle and entanglement which you have shown to exist in visible objects." "I give you credit," says Parmenides further on, "for saying to Zeno that you did not care to solve



the perplexity in reference to visible objects, or to consider the question in that way ; but only in reference to thought and to what may be called ideas" (ἀλλὰ περὶ ἐκείνα, ἃ μάλιστά τις ἂν λόγῳ λάβοι καὶ εἶδη ἂν ἡγήσαιο εἶναι).<sup>1</sup>

The criticism here, though primarily directed against Zeno's so-called paradoxes (which Socrates prefers to call truisms) concerning the one and the many, rest and motion, is equally applicable to Parmenides's treatment of Being. To Parmenides Being is an objective reality, which can be likened to a sphere, εὐκύκλου σφαίρης ἐναλίγκιον ὄγκῳ. Although dissatisfied with the materialism of the Ionic physicists and the semi-materialism of the Pythagorean numbers, he can yet so far avail himself of material imagery as to conceive his Being as finite, as lying within definite limits, as co-equal every way. But the importance of Being as a στοιχείον of things is wholly lost if we confine ourselves to this crudely realistic way of regarding it. Being is an ultimate element, not because it is some abstract thing, but because, as a form of predication, it implies the activity of Thought. We should view it, not as an objective reality, but, as Socrates would say, "in reference to thought and what may be called ideas." Desiring to find one fixed and permanent element in things, we find it in the constant presence of an active mind. Being, as an abstract objective thing, is nonsense. Being, as a form of predication, involves the metaphysical discovery that the world arises in consciousness. For the truth is that Parmenides did not rise to the full

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Parmen.* 129 D, E ; 135 E (Jowett's translation *in loc.*).

height of his conception ; he did not predicate being of thought, but thought of being. With him Being is the larger term, without which thought is not ; he does not regard Thought as the one widest category, under which time, place, and existence may be subsumed.

The difficulty, however, under which Parmenides laboured is one which he shared in common with nearly all the Greek thinkers, and with Plato himself. It appeared an impossibility for the Greeks to believe in the existence of a mental concept *per se*, without some objective correlative reality. "But may not the ideas," asked Socrates in defence of his own thesis, "be thoughts only, and have no proper existence except in our minds, Parmenides?" It was a bold suggestion for Socrates to make, and it contains, of course, the real truth of the matter ; but the Eleatic sage (and Plato too, speaking by his mouth) will not allow it for an instant : "Can there be individual thoughts which are thoughts of nothing?" he asks, and Socrates is obliged to confess that it is impossible. And a still clearer statement occurs further on : "I think, Socrates," says Parmenides, "that you, or any one who maintains the existence of absolute ideas, will admit that they cannot exist in us" (ὁμολογῆσαι ἂν μηδεμίαν αὐτῶν εἶναι ἐν ἡμῖν). "No," answers Socrates at once, "for then they would be no longer absolute."<sup>1</sup> Hence it comes that in Plato himself we have not only the fiction of τὸ ἄμα ὄν τε καὶ μὴ ὄν to correspond to δόξα, but the more monstrous fiction of τὸ μὴ ὄν to correspond to ἄγνοια. And so Parmenides himself, despite his affirmation that Thought

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Parmen.* 132 B ; 133 C (Jowett's translation).

and Being are the same, never quite attains the idealistic standpoint that the only reality of Being is Thought.

A second line of criticism is suggested by Plato in reference to the word *ἐστι* itself. Modern logicians tell us that the Greeks never surmounted the equivocation between "is" as a verb of existence, and "is" as a mere copula. This is perfectly true of the historic Parmenides, who, as has been already suggested by our analysis of his position, regarded *ἐστι* as part and parcel of a vast abstract *τὸ ὄν*. But Plato's Parmenides has a flash of almost prophetic genius. *Ἔστι* can mean both "is" and "has being." There is a difference between saying "one is" and "one has being." In the first case we can affirm, with the Eleatic, that the one is out of all relation to plurality; it has no magnitude, and therefore no parts. But in the other case, if one has being, and partakes of being, it is, says Plato, of such a nature as to have parts (*σκόπει οὖν, εἰ οὐκ ἀνάγκη ταύτην τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τοιοῦτον ὄν τὸ ἐν σημαίνειν, οἷον μέρη ἔχειν*);<sup>1</sup> Or, to put it in simpler words, the verb *εἶναι*, if used as expressing existence, involves an immediate reference to time and space, plurality and motion; if it is used merely as a copula, it signifies the relation of ideas to one another. In the former sense, Parmenides's *τὸ ἔν* is as materialistic and actual as Thales's water and Anaximenes's air, only in the second sense can it be described as above and beyond the forms of sense-perception. If Being be taken as evidence of mental activity, then and then only can it be described as an ultimate reality.

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Parmen.* 142 C.

Once again Plato, both in the *Sophistes* and in the *Parmenides*, puts us on the track of a wider conception than the Eleatic. In his later dialogues Plato would appear to be concerned more with logic than ontology, and the result is that many of the earlier difficulties begin to be cleared away. "Being" and "non-being" are only puzzles to the mind which regards them as *onta*, as things-in-themselves: when it is once seen that they are merely logical determinations, the puzzle is solved. In the *Republic*, Plato had placed τὸ μὴ ὄν by the side of τὸ ὄν, as though both were, in a sense, realities. But the mental faculty corresponding to τὸ μὴ ὄν could only be negatively described as ἄγνοια, and the reality, which was taken away in the description "non-being," could not be restored by conceiving non-being to enter with being into the composition of phenomena. In the *Sophistes*, Plato saw that non-being and being were only correlative terms of logic: τὸ μὴ ὄν was not the negation, but only "the other" (θάτερον) of τὸ ὄν. "Non-being is the other of being, and has as many kinds as there are differences in being. This doctrine is the simple converse of the famous proposition of Spinoza not 'omnis determinatio est negatio,' but 'omnis negatio est determinatio'; not, all distinction is negation, but all negation is distinction. Non-being is the unfolding or determining of being, and is a necessary element in all other things that are."<sup>1</sup> But if this be so, if non-being is essential to being, Parmenides was clearly wrong in repeating with such constant emphasis that ἔστι excludes οὐκ ἔστι. The "damnable iteration" that

<sup>1</sup> Jowett's *Plato*, vol. iv. p. 384.



only being is and that non-being is not at all, could only be made in the age before logic. Just as the existence of the one involves the existence of the many (as Plato tells us in the *Parmenides*), so too does being involve the existence of non-being. To describe the assertion that non-being is, as "a wholly incredible pathway," is to make ἔστι an abstract entity existing out of all relation to common thought and common speech. "Is" and "is not" are logical and mental, not ontological, determinations.

But the clearest proof of the imperfections of the Parmenidean Idealism is furnished by Parmenides himself in the second part of his poem. In it, as we have said, he gives a cosmology of things as they seem to be, traced back to two original principles, night and day, light and darkness. Consistency may indeed be saved by describing this second part as a burlesque of contemporary physics, although the earnest way in which Parmenides describes the origin of the "sun's pure lamp" and the "orb-eyed moon's circumambient labours"<sup>1</sup> hardly supports such a thesis. But what are we to make of the following fragment, which Aristotle has preserved for us? "For, in proportion as each one hath a mixture of many-jointed limbs, so is his mind: for the nature of men's limbs is identical with their thought: for the principle which prevails is thought."<sup>2</sup> However the last words may be understood,<sup>3</sup> it is clear

<sup>1</sup> Possibly the descriptions belong to Empedocles, and not to Parmenides, Cf. Stein *in loc.*

<sup>2</sup> Arist. *Met.* 3, 5; cf. Theophr. *de Sens.* 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ritter translates πλέον as the Full; Hegel, the Most; Brandis, the Mightier; Steinhart, the Preponderant-fier. Theophrastus explains it as

that Parmenides makes no distinction between the spiritual and the corporeal, between sensation and thought. But if Thought and Sensation be not distinguished, and if Sensation be clearly dependent on the bodily organs, what becomes of that abstract reality τὸ εἶν and τὸ ὄν, accessible only to Thought?

But in philosophy, as in life, we must judge a man by his best and not by his worst. Very few even of those who have seemed to forecast "as from some watch-tower of speculation," the courses of future thought, have been able to sustain themselves at the level of their highest conceptions. Here and there they have uttered some pregnant phrase and struck out one of those thoughts which are destined to sparkle on the forefinger of time: for the rest, they are but the creatures of their own epoch, living at the level of contemporary speculation, and giving expression to the views of their age. It is enough for us, if we would do justice to Parmenides—whom Plato declares that "he revered and honoured more than all other philosophers together"—to remember that at a time when Athens was repeating the crude physical theories of Thales, Anaximander, and Heracleitus, and Italy was full of the mystical mathematics of the Pythagoreans, he threw down into the arena of controversy the first, the greatest, the most lasting of the discoveries of metaphysics.

For assuredly there is no deeper principle than this, that the truth of things is not Matter or Force or Atoms

τὸ ὑπερβάλλον, the preponderating. Of the two elements, the one that preponderates and overcomes is thought. Cf. Zeller, in *Parmen.*, in his *History of Philosophy*.

or Molecules, but the thinking intelligence. There is no rest in the vexed sea of speculation till this truth be secured. When we know that the deepest, ultimate ground of reality to which we can attain is just our true self of Thought, then we gain not only peace, but freedom. “Cognoscetis veritatem et veritas liberos faciet vos.” The true first principle, which Hegel calls *Idea* (*Idee*) and Aristotle νοήσις ἢ καθ’ αὐτήν, or ἐνέργεια ἢ καθ’ αὐτήν, is the self-conscious reason. Every other first principle which we in turn set up only leads us back to this. Matter or mechanical cause is meaningless without the presupposition of Force or dynamical cause: the dynamical cause involves the final cause as its condition, and the final cause presupposes a free intelligence. “It is indifferent,” as the Goddess told Parmenides, “whence I begin, for thither shall I return again.” Thought, Reason, Intelligence—this is the ultimate reality of things. And it is because Parmenides saw this truth, albeit “in a glass darkly,” that we call him the first metaphysician and earliest idealist. By his dogma of the identity of Thought and Being, the Eleatic philosopher seems to stretch a hand across the ages to the modern idealists of Germany.



## APPENDIX TO ESSAY I.

THE following is Stein's arrangement of the fragments of the first part of the Parmenidean poem "on Truth," which is roughly translated in the foregoing essay :—

(Τὰ πρὸς ἀληθείην.)

Εἰ δ' ἄγ' ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῦθον ἀκούσας,  
αἵπερ ὁδοὶ μῦναι διζήσιος εἰσὶ νοῆσαι.  
ἢ μὲν, ὅπως ἔστιν τε καὶ ὥς οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,  
πειθοῦς ἐστὶ κέλευθος· ἀληθείη γὰρ ὀπηδεῖ.  
ἢ δ', ὥς οὐκ ἔστιν τε καὶ ὥς χρεῶν ἐστὶ μὴ εἶναι,  
τὴν δὴ τοι φράζω παναπειθῇ ἔμμεν ἀταρπόν.  
οὔτε γὰρ ἂν γνοίης τό γε μὴ εἶναι, οὐ γὰρ ἐφικτόν,  
οὔτε φράσαις· τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι.

\* \* \* \* \*  
χρὴ τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ' εἶναι ἔμμεναι· ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι,  
μηδὲν δ' οὐκ εἶναι. τὰ σ' ἐγὼ φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα.  
ταύτης πρῶτ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ διζήσιος εἶργε νόημα.  
αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ τῆςδ', ἣ δὴ βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδὲν  
πλάζονται δίκρανοι· ἀμηχανίη γάρ ἐν αὐτῶν  
στήθεσιν ἰθύνει πλαγκτὸν νόον· οἱ δὲ φορεῦνται  
κωφοὶ ὁμῶς τυφλοὶ τε, τεθηπότες, ἄκριτα φύλα,  
οἷς τὸ πέλειν τε καὶ οὐκ εἶναι τῶντων νενόμισται  
κοῦ τῶντων, πάντων δὲ παλίντροπός ἐστι κέλευθος.

\* \* \* \* \*  
οὐ γὰρ μήποτε τοῦτο δαμῇ εἶναι μὴ εἶναι.  
ἀλλὰ σὺ τῆςδ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ διζήσιος εἶργε νόημα.

\* \* \* \* \*  
μόνη δ' ἔτι μῦθος ὁδοῖο  
λείπεται, ὥς ἔστιν· ταύτη δ' ἐπὶ σήματ' ἔασι  
πολλὰ μάλ', ὥς ἀγένητον εἶναι καὶ ἀνώλεθρόν ἐστιν,

οὐλον, μονογενές τε καὶ ἀτρεμές, οὐδ' ἀτέλεστον,  
οὐδέ ποτ' ἦν οὐδ' ἔσται, ἐπεὶ νῦν ἐστὶν ὁμοῦ πᾶν,  
ἓν, ξυνεχές· τίνα γὰρ γένναν διζήσεται αὐτοῦ;  
πῇ πόθεν αὖξήθεν; οὐτ' ἐκ μὴ ἔοντος ἑάσω  
φάσθαι σ' οὐδὲ νοεῖν· οὐ γὰρ φατὸν οὐδὲ νοητὸν  
ἐστὶν ὅπως οὐκ ἔστι· τί δ' ἂν μιν καὶ χρέος ὦρσεν  
ὑστερον ἢ πρόσθεν τοῦ μηδενὸς ἀρξάμενον φῦν;  
οὕτως ἢ πάμπαν πελέμεν χρεῶν ἐστὶν ἢ οὐκί.  
οὐδέ ποτ' ἐκ γε πέλοντος ἐφήσει πίστιος ἰσχύς  
γίγνεσθαι τι παρ' αὐτό. τοῦ εἵνεκεν οὔτε γενέσθαι  
οὐτ' ὄλλυσθαι ἀνῆκε δίκη χαλάσασα πέδησιν,  
ἀλλ' ἔχει.

\* \* \* \*  
ἐστὶν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν. κέκριται δ' οὖν ὥσπερ ἀνάγκη,  
τὴν μὲν ἑᾶν ἀνόητον, ἀνώνυμον· οὐ γὰρ ἀληθὴς  
ἐστὶν ὁδός· τὴν δ' ὥστε πέλειν καὶ ἐτήτυμον εἶναι.  
πῶς δ' ἂν ἔπειτ' ἀπόλοιτο πέλον, πῶς δ' αὖ κε γένοιτο;  
εἴ γε γένοιτ', οὐκ ἔστ', οὐδ' εἴ ποτε μέλλει ἔσεσθαι.

\* \* \* \*  
τὼς γένεσις μὲν ἀπέσβησται καὶ ἄπιστος ὄλεθρος.  
νῦδὲ διαίρετόν ἐστιν, ἐπεὶ πᾶν ἐστὶν ὁμοῖον·  
οὐδέ τί πη κενεόν, τό κεν εἴργοι μιν ξυνέχεσθαι,  
οὐδέ τι χειρότερον, πᾶν δὲ πλέον ἐστὶν ἔοντος.  
τῷ ξυνεχές πᾶν ἐστίν· ἔον γὰρ ἔοντι πελάζει.

\* \* \* \*  
αὐτὰρ ἀκίνητον μεγάλων ἐν πείρασι δεσμῶν  
ἐστίν, ἀναρχον, ἄπαυστον, ἐπεὶ γένεσις καὶ ὄλεθρος  
τῇλε μάλ' ἐπλάγχθησαν, ἀπῶσε δὲ πίστις ἀληθής,  
τῶυτόν τ' ἐν τῷτῳ τε μένον, καθ' εἰνὸς τε κεῖται.  
οὕτως ἔμπεδον αὖθι μένει. κρατερὴ γὰρ ἀνάγκη  
πείρατος ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἔχει, τό μιν ἀμφὶς ἐέργει.  
οὔνεκεν οὐκ ἀτελεύτητον τὸ πέλον θέμις εἶναι.  
ἐστὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐπιδευές  
. . . . . μὴ ἔον δ' ἂν παντὸς ἐδεῖτο.

\* \* \* \*  
τῶυτόν δ' ἐστι νοεῖν τε καὶ οὔνεκεν ἐστὶ νόημα·  
οὐ γὰρ ἄνευ τοῦ ἔοντος, ἐν ᾧ πεφαισμένον ἐστίν,  
εὐρήσεις τὸ νοεῖν.

\* \* \* \*

οὐδὲν χρέος ἔστιν ἢ ἔσται  
 ἄλλο πάρεξ τοῦ ἑόντος, ἐπεὶ τό γε μοῖρ' ἐπέδησεν  
 οὐλον ἀκίνητόν τ' ἔμεναι. τῷ πάντ' ὄνομ' ἔστιν  
 ὅσσα βροτοὶ κατέθεντο, πεποιθότες εἶναι ἀληθῆ,  
 γίγνεσθαί τε καὶ ὄλλυσθαι, εἰνυί τε καὶ οὐκί,  
 καὶ τόπον ἀλλάσσειν διὰ τε χροά φανὸν ἀμείβειν.  
 αὐτὰρ ἔον πείρας πύματον τετέλεσμένον ἔστί,  
 πάντοθεν εὐκύκλου σφαίρης ἐναλίγκιον ὄγκῳ,  
 μεσσόθεν ἰσοπαλὲς πάντῃ· τὸ γὰρ οὔτε τι μείζον  
 οὔτε τι βαιότερον πέλειαι χρεῶν ἔστι τῇ ἢ τῇ.  
 οὔτε γὰρ οὐκ ἔον ἔστι, τὸ κεν παύῃ μιν ἰκέσθαι  
 εἰς ὁμόν, οὔτ' ἔον ἔστιν ὅπως εἶη κεν ἑόντος  
 τῇ μᾶλλον τῇ δ' ἥσσον, ἐπεὶ πᾶν ἔστιν ἄσυλον.  
 ἢ γὰρ πάντοθεν ἴσον ὁμῶς ἐν πείρασι κύρει.

## II.

### ANCIENT HEDONISM—EPICURUS.

IN the year 1752, certain workmen, who were excavating the soil of the modern Portici, which covers the ancient Herculaneum, struck upon a small chamber or cell belonging apparently to a country house which in former times looked over the sea. Round the walls of this little chamber were arranged, on a pavement of mosaic, chests and cupboards of marqueterie, and standing on one of these, in the middle of the room, were seen busts of Demosthenes, Epicurus, Zeno, and Hermarchus. It was almost the first discovery of real importance which had rewarded the patience of the explorers.<sup>1</sup> Some ancient statues had indeed been unearthed in 1713, during the excavations carried on by the Prince d'Elbœuf, and again in 1737 under the orders of Charles III. : but the discovery of Pompeii in 1748, and the superior facility with which excavations could be carried on in the "passamonte" (light cinders) which covered the ruins of the sister town, had diverted attention for a while from Herculaneum. Yet the soil beneath Portici and Resina offered relics of far greater value. On the shelves of the cupboards found in the

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the Emperor Titus was anxious to restore the city, which had been ruined in A.D. 79 ; cf. Suetonius, *Tit.* 8 : "Bona oppressorum in Vesevo, quorum heredes non exstabant, restitutioni afflictarum civitatum attribuit." Winckelmann is supposed to be wrong in saying (*Werke*, ii. p. 23), on the strength of an inscription containing the words "signa translata ex abditis locis," that the Romans carried on excavations.

room of the buried villa lay little rolls, about two or three inches in diameter, and a palm in length, the appearance of which gave the workmen the notion that they were in the shop of a charcoal or coal merchant. An accidental fall revealed the fact that they were covered with decipherable letters,—that in reality the charcoal-rolls were nothing but rolls of papyrus, charred with the action of fire.<sup>1</sup>

So startling a discovery was not long in engaging the attention of savants. A certain Camillo Paderni, who was superintending the excavations in 1752, was the first to make an attempt to open the volumes. Despairing of success in other ways, he adopted the barbarous plan of cutting the volume in half longitudinally, and was quite satisfied, if the result of his labours revealed the language in which the manuscripts were written. By this means no less than 337 Greek volumes and eighteen Latin were destroyed in a few months. Fortunately his successors in inquiry were not so impatient, and something was done to repair his ravages,

<sup>1</sup> What this villa was, and to whom it belonged, forms an interesting matter for speculation. According to Prof. Comparetti, whose name is honourably known in connection with explorations at Herculaneum, the villa belonged to Calpurnius Piso, the colleague of Gabinius in the consulship (58 B.C.) The majority of the charred scrolls found there are the works of Philodemus, a late Epicurean, of no particular merits as a philosopher. Philodemus was unlikely to have a villa of such pretensions belonging to himself; and he might have been a sort of superior secretary and philosophical instructor to Piso. Comparetti further supposes that two bronze busts, which have been sometimes called Seneca and Berenice, represent in reality Piso and Gabinius, the latter of whom Cicero calls effeminate. See the essay furnished by Comparetti to the volume of articles published on the occasion of the eighteen hundredth anniversary of the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum. (*“La villa dei Pisoni in Ercolano e la sua Biblioteca,”* published in *“Pompei e la Regione sotterata dal Vesuvio nell’anno LXXIX.”* Napoli; Giannini, 1879.)



as well as to carry on his original object. A series of investigators since 1752 have worked with admirable devotion to recover the manuscripts, amongst whom the important names are those of Piaggio in 1754, Mazocchi, Lapira in 1786, Hayter at the commencement of the nineteenth century, Sickler in 1814, and Davy in 1819 and 1820. Every kind of plan has been tried,—fumigation, exposure under glass to the sun, and different modes of chemical treatment; but it has had in the long-run to be confessed that the plan which Piaggio invented is on the whole the most successful. It is an infinitely slow and laborious process. The first task is to discover the margin of the paper, which is by no means always easy. Then the roll is hung on two ribbons, and rests on wool, spread on a piece of card. This card is held on leather supports, which can be raised or lowered by a screw. After all this preliminary work, the real process begins. Small portions of gold-beaters' skin are glued to the paper by means of isinglass, and, when the back of the paper is thus strengthened, threads of silk are attached to it, fastened to a cylinder. The cylinder is slowly turned, while other workmen open out the leaf with the point of a needle; and in this manner in the course of four or five hours, a single inch is unrolled. The portions thus opened are laid on linen, copied and engraved, and the engravings form the collection now known as the "*Volumina Herculanensia*," brought out under the authority of the *Accademia Ercolanese*.<sup>1</sup>

Such is a brief history of the discovery which will

<sup>1</sup> See the account given by Dr. J. C. G. Boot, in his *Notice sur les manuscrits trouvés à Herculanum* (Amsterdam, 1841), and also the report of Mr. Hayter, who was sent by the Prince Regent to Naples.

in time give us, in all probability, a fuller acquaintance with the Epicurean philosophy. For of the unearthed fragments, the great majority belong either to Epicurus himself, or to Philodemus, an Epicurean contemporary of Cicero. Hitherto we have learnt much of Epicureanism from the mouths of its adversaries : from the professed sceptic, Sextus Empiricus—from Plutarch, who wrote against an influential Epicurean named Colotes—from Seneca, who was a Stoic—from Cicero, above all, in most cases a most unfriendly and even contemptuous critic of Epicureanism. Of the positive tenets of Epicurus we learn most from the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius, to whose recital we must, of course, add the testimony of the eloquent Epicurean poet Lucretius. Of all the 300 rolls of Epicurus's own writings, the scant remains we possess are his will, a few epistles and letters, and a philosophical epitome, entitled *κύρια δόξαι*, preserved by Diogenes : some individual expressions which we find in Seneca, Plutarch, and others : and fragments of Books ii. and xi., and portions of a few other books of his large work "on Nature," which form part of the *Volumina Herculanensia*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following, according to Professor Gomperz, is a table of fragments belonging to Epicurus from *Herculaneum* :—

1. }			
2. }	<i>περὶ φύσεως</i>	Bk. ii.	
3. }		Bk. xi.	} On <i>μετέωρα</i> .
4. }		Bk. xi.	
5.		Bk. xiv.	
6.		Bk. xv.	
7.		Bk. xxviii.	On Causes of Error.
8. }	?		} Fragments on the Freedom of
9. }	?		
10.	?		On Error.
11.	?		On Life after Death.
12.	?		

The treatise was originally in thirty-seven books. Facsimiles of 1 and 3-10



To recast for ourselves, however, the society of Epicurus in its main features, is no difficult task. There is hardly any other ancient philosopher whose personality comes before us with such strikingly clear and definite traits. His was essentially a simple character, with none of the profundity of the student, or the exclusiveness which marks the expounder of a singular and isolated system. It was indeed the adaptability of his doctrines to general life—to the ordinary pursuits of ordinary people—which gave them such an unique charm in the eyes of his contemporaries, and made his school flourish from the third century before Christ to the third or fourth century after.<sup>1</sup> Nor were the characteristics essentially changed in this long life of 700 years, for there was no school which was more careful to preserve the actual words of the founder. Epicurus had not the obtrusive idiosyncrasy of the Cynic, nor the severe and strict austerity of the Stoic. Philosophy with him did not mean speculation, nor yet an isolated seclusion: neither was its effect to be seen in the outward clothing, or want of clothing, of a Diogenes. Philosophy was “a daily business of speech and thought, to secure a happy life,” *ἐνέργεια λόγοις καὶ διαλογισμοῖς τὸν εὐδαίμονα βίον περιποιούσα*. It was not necessary to have read deeply or thought

are preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. In 2 occurs a curious word, *ἐξωστικός*. Is this the right reading of the word in Diog. L. x. 143, which usually stands *ἐξοριστικῇ* (al. *ἐξεριστικῇ*, *ἐξαιρετικῇ*)?

<sup>1</sup> Epicurus was born in the year 341 or 342 B.C. Came to Athens in 306 B.C. (Diog. x. 2). Died 270 B.C. (Diog. x. 15). That the school lasted to at least the third century after Christ is proved by what Diogenes says (§ 9), writing in the first half of the third century, according to Zeller.

profoundly : indeed, literature and education were often more of a hindrance than otherwise. "My good sirs, leave all culture alone" (*παιδείαν πᾶσαν, μακάριοι, φεύγετε*) writes Epicurus in his letter to Pythoclés.<sup>1</sup> It need not trouble any one, says Metrodorus, his pupil, if he had never read a line of Homer, and did not know whether Hector was a Trojan or a Greek. And Cicero<sup>2</sup> adds his testimony, "*nihil opus esse eum, philosophus qui futurus sit, scire literas.*" One study, however, for a philosopher was absolutely necessary, the study of nature, and that for the reason that a man cannot be happy unless he discard superstition. "A man cannot be released from his fear on matters of highest import, unless he knows the nature of the universe and discards mythical superstition, so that without physical science our very pleasures are tainted" (*ὥστε οὐκ ἦν ἄνευ φυσιολογίας ἀκεραίας τὰς ἡδονὰς ἀπολαμβάνειν*).<sup>3</sup> For the rest, a simple life without ostentation, without meanness, not pharisaically temperate, nor yet too liberally self-indulgent, was the ideal of Epicurus. "For myself, I can be pleased with bread and water," he says, "yet send me a little cheese, in order that when I want to be extravagant I may be."<sup>4</sup> This was the man, Diogenes pithily adds, whose doctrine was that pleasure was the end of life.

Not less clearly stand out the personal kindness, the sympathy, the generosity, the sweetness of Epicurus's character. In the little circle which surrounded

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 6 ; cf. § 121 : "The wise man lives poems, and does not make them"—*ποιήματά τε ἐνεργεῖν, οὐκ ἂν ποιῆσαι*. Also § 87.

<sup>2</sup> Cic. *de Fin.* ii. 4. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Diog. x. 143.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 11.

the philosopher in his famous gardens were Polyaenus, Hermarchus his future successor, Colotes, possibly Leonteus, and his wife Themista, Leontion, and a beloved disciple, Metrodorus. Metrodorus, who from the time of his first acquaintance with Epicurus only left his side for six months, died before his master, leaving two children. For these Epicurus seems to have had an especial tenderness, leaving many injunctions about them in his will. "Let my heirs watch over the daughter of Metrodorus," he writes, "and when she grows up, let them give her in marriage to whomsoever Hermarchus shall choose, if she be modest and obedient." Among the Herculanean remains there is a letter of Epicurus to a little child, who may possibly be this daughter of Metrodorus. The letter runs thus: "We came to Lampsacus, Pythocles, Hermarchus, Ctesippus, and myself, and we are quite well. We found there Themista and our other friends, and they are quite well. I hope you are well too, and your mamma, and that you obey her and papa and Matron in everything, as you used to do. For you know quite well, my pet, that I and all the others love you very much because you are obedient to them in everything."<sup>1</sup> The use of the very words of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gomperz's "Ein brief Epikurs an ein kind" in *Hermes*, vol. v. (1871) pp. 386-395.

According to the arrangement of Gomperz the fragment is as follows:—

ἀφείγμεθα εἰς Λαμψακὸν ὑ-  
γιαίνοντες, ἐγὼ καὶ Πυθο-  
κλῆς καὶ Ἑρμαρχὸς καὶ Κτή-  
σιππος, καὶ ἐκεῖ ματειλήφα-  
μεν ὑγιαίνοντας Θεμίσ-  
ταν καὶ τοὺς λοιποὺς φίλους.  
εὖ δὲ ποιεῖς καὶ εἰ σὺ ὑγι-  
αίνεις, καὶ ἡ μάμπη, καὶ τῇ (?)

childhood (“papa” and “mamma”), the tender little expression, *ναπία* (though why Doric in form it is hard to say), the travelling with a sort of retinue, all seem to mark this letter as genuine. But if so, what an admirable comment it forms on the encomiums in the 9th and 10th sections of Diogenes’s history!—on the man who could keep about him, “held prisoners by the siren-charms of his teaching” (*ταῖς δογματικαῖς αὐτοῦ σειρῇσι προκατασχεθέντες*), such a host of followers “that whole cities could not contain them,” who counted in his school men and women alike, and could enlist in the number of his disciples even his slaves, one of whom, named Mus, attained some celebrity as a philosopher! And in this context we may perhaps read his dying words to Idomeneus,<sup>1</sup> which though they contain possibly a note of exaggerated rhetoric, yet bear a last testimony to the quiet happy life among friends which his philosophy recommended. “On this last, yet blessed, day of my life, I write to you. Pains and tortures of body I have to the full, but there is set over-against these the joy of my heart at the memory of our happy conversations in the past. Do you, if you would be worthy of your devotion to me and philosophy, take care of the children of Metrodorus.” Ἐπιμελοῦ τῶν παίδων Μητροδώρου were the last words he wrote.

καὶ πάπα καὶ Μάτρωνι πάν-  
τα πείθῃ, ὥσπερ καὶ ἔμ-  
προσθεν· εὖ γὰρ ἴσθι, ναπία,  
ὅτι καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ  
πάντες σε μέγα φιλοῦμεν  
ὅτι τούτοις πείθη(ι) πάντα.

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 22. The power and influence of Epicurus over his disciples is acknowledged by Lucian: *Alex. Pseud.* caps. 17, 25, and 61 (Jacobitz).



If this is not the ordinary notion which is held about Epicurus, the reason is that his philosophy is more studied than his life, and there are many points of view from which his philosophy seems to invite criticism and disparagement. With some critics, the fundamental idea of Epicurus—the value of human happiness—is not one which enlists their sympathies; by others an unconscious comparison is drawn between Epicureanism and the magnificent systems which preceded it—very much of course to the detriment of the former; by others, again, that notorious dislike of culture, which the founder of the school not only felt but was proud of, is considered fatal to his philosophic fame. And in these ways Epicureanism is undoubtedly open to blame; to which must also be added a certain logical weakness and inconsistency of thought which is not surprising in one who thought so lightly of logic as a study. The poverty of the theory of knowledge and truth, the inconsistency between a systematic incuriousness about astronomy,<sup>1</sup> and the acknowledgment of the necessity of physics, the flat contradiction between the reign of Law in Nature and the Freedom of Will in Man, the difficulty of understanding how a purely selfish theory of life could not only extol disinterested friendship, but even worship gods from whom nothing could be obtained,—all these points, and many others beside, must tend to lower our admiration for Epicurus as a philosopher, however attractive a character may belong to Epicurus as a man.

But the historical circumstances of the time, which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the astonishing assertions in Diog. x. 91, 92 ff.,—Epicurus thought that the sun was about the same size as it appears to be, etc. etc.

perhaps promoted individual virtues, were fatal to the elaboration of a systematic philosophy. It was a time of weariness and exhaustion—a weariness of metaphysical abstraction, a weariness of sophistical ingenuity and rhetoric, a weariness of political activity. At the time when Epicurus was living at Athens, at the close of the fourth century B.C., the Grecian world had seen the downfall of Thebes, the exile of Demosthenes, the shipwreck of the Hellenic state-system. The death of Alexander at Babylon had led to the fruitless struggle for independence in the Lamian war; the conquest of Antipater had crushed out the last efforts of Greek spirit. Aristotle, accused of atheism, had left the city of Socrates and Plato, and had died at Chalcis. In the misery and repression of the time, men did not want far-reaching theory or elaborate system, but something definite, precise, concrete: some ideal of existence which would suit those who had given up politics and had become isolated and self-centred, a theory of individual life, not a compendium of cosmical knowledge. The philosophy of Epicurus was the most effectual answer to the needs of the age. While Stoicism preached heroic fortitude, and had to be transformed in a century and a half, Epicureanism in the fourth century after Christ remained essentially the same system which had been promulgated by the son of Neocles.

“The aim and end of all action,” says Epicurus, “is that we may neither suffer nor fear,”—*τούτου γὰρ χάριν ἅπαντα πράττομεν ὅπως μήτε ἄλγῶμεν μήτε ταρβῶμεν*<sup>1</sup>—“when once this end is realised, all the tempest of the

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 128.



soul subsides, for animal nature has then no need to satisfy, nothing is wanting to the full completion of good, whether of body or soul. For we want pleasure when we feel pain at its absence ; when we feel no pain, we want no pleasure. It is for this reason that we say that pleasure is the beginning and end of a happy life." Here at least there is a concrete and definite answer to men's demands. "Who will show us any good?" was the pressing question asked amid the ruins of Hellenism. The good is pleasure, and pleasure is the good, is the answer of Epicurus. Nor will he have any mistake as to his meaning. "I can conceive of no good remaining," he says, "if you take from me the pleasures of taste, the pleasures of love, and the pleasures of ear and eye."<sup>1</sup> And Metrodorus, the disciple, exaggerating, as is the wont of disciples, the teaching of his master, says boldly : "It is in the belly that the natural reason of man finds the chief object of his care."<sup>2</sup> The brother of Metrodorus, a certain Timocrates, who was a renegade from Epicurus's school, found in this and other texts plenty of matter for scandal. He had had hard work, he said, to get away from his nightly revels and all his mystic confraternity. As to Epicurus δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐμῆν ὑπὸ τρυφῆς—συνεῖναί τε αὐτῷ τε καὶ Μητροδώρῳ ἐταίρας καὶ ἄλλας· Μαρμάριον καὶ Ἡδεῖαν καὶ Ἐρώτιον καὶ Νικίδιον.<sup>3</sup> "Notum inter accolae odium," and Epicurus's name was the subject of many attributes, of which *κιναιδολογός* was by no means the worst.

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ap. Athen. vii. ii., περὶ γαστέρα ὁ κατὰ φύσιν βαδίζων λόγος τὴν ἅπασαν ἔχει σπουδὴν. Cf. Eur. *Cyclops*, 335 (Paley), καὶ τῇ μεγίστῃ γαστρὶ τῇδε δαιμόνων.

<sup>3</sup> Diog. x. 6, 7.

But Epicurus was not such a tiro in pleasures as to suppose that a life of sensual enjoyment was a life of happiness. A man of fierce, sensual nature like Aristippus, with the hot blood of Africa in his veins, might indeed think so, and make moments of pleasurable emotion (*μονόχρονος ἡδονή*) the motto of his school. But a man who lived no tempestuous life like the Cyrenaic, but taught in his garden at Athens, who expressly recommended his pupils to live in the country,<sup>1</sup> was not likely to be a libertine and a voluptuary. Does pleasure only consist in motion and restlessness? Can indiscriminate indulgence in pleasure secure happiness, not only for the present, but for life? Do pleasures differ only in quantity and not in kind? and is not the pleasure of the mind higher than the pleasure of the body? Does not man, as rational, look before and after, and is not therefore the future and the past, as well as the present, matter of concern for him? Such were the questions which naturally presented themselves to Epicurus, and materially qualified his views on pleasure. "We do not choose every pleasure: there are times when we relinquish many pleasures, when the consequent inconveniences are greater, and we hold many pains to be more choiceworthy than pleasures, when, after much endurance of pain, we are rewarded by a higher pleasure. Every pleasure is in its essential nature a good, but not every pleasure is choiceworthy, just as every pain is an evil, but is not therefore always to be avoided."<sup>2</sup> And again, very explicitly: "When we say that pleasure is the end, we do not mean the

<sup>1</sup> [τὸν σόφον] φιλαγρήσειν.—Diog. 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 129.

pleasures of the libertine and the pleasures of mere enjoyment, as some critics, either ignorant, or antagonistic, or unfriendly, suppose ; but the absence of pain in the body and trouble in the mind.”<sup>1</sup> Hence the necessity of prudence and self-control in the direction of life—a prudence which is only to be taught by philosophy. “For it is not drinkings and revellings, nor the pleasures of love, nor tables loaded with dainties, which beget the happy life, but sober reasoning (*νήφων λογισμός*), to discover what must be sought or avoided, and why, and to banish the fancies which have most power to distract men’s souls. Philosophy has no more priceless element than prudence, from which all the other virtues flow, teaching us that it is not possible to live pleasantly without also living sensibly, honourably, and justly : nor yet to live sensibly, honourably, and justly without living pleasantly.”<sup>2</sup> Therefore says Epicurus, “Let not the young man delay to learn philosophy, neither let the old man weary of philosophy : for no one is either under age or over age to secure his soul’s health.”<sup>3</sup> In point of fact, the end of a wise man’s life is not pleasure in the ordinary sense, but health, ease, serenity (*ὑγίεια, ἀπονία, ἀταραξία*).<sup>4</sup>

To the realisation of this serenity many things appear as obstacles. Nature seems against a man, fate crushes him in its grasp, the gods are not always his friends, death comes at the last to end all his hopes and energies. Epicurus saw clearly enough that these impediments

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 131.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 132.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 122.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Lucian, *Bis accusatus*, cap. 22. *Parasitus*, ch. 11. The former passage is a dialogue between the Στοά and Epicurus himself ; the latter is concerned with the Epicurean idea of felicity.

must be removed out of the path of men's happiness, although, unfortunately, in nearly each case, the removal is affected at the expense of his logic. The whole of the superstructure which he builds on the foundations of Hedonism and Sensationalism is an interesting attempt to go beyond his ground-plan, to find room for the complexity and the many-sidedness of life on the narrow platform of what is called Individualism. Most of the miseries of life are caused by superstition, and the first effort of the wise man must consequently be to oppose science to religion, a knowledge of nature to an imaginative mythology. Science, says Epicurus, is freedom; mental serenity means enfranchisement from all mythical opinions, and the constant memory of the main facts of nature. "For if we study those events whence arise our anxiety and fear, we shall find their true causes and be free."<sup>1</sup> Here is the first breach made in that theory of unintellectualism with which Epicurus started. It is all very well to tell men to eschew culture and be happy; but it is impossible at the same time to tell them to be sages. However much it may be true in some given point that ignorance is bliss, it is not a good maxim for a life which aims at being continuously happy. The theory breaks down at the outset, directly it is discovered that happiness means at least freedom from fear, and that fearlessness is not attainable without knowledge. Some of the elements of culture may indeed be abandoned; a man need not know literature, he may "act poems and not make them;" a Polyaenus may, on his entrance to the Epicurean ranks, abjure the higher

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 82.



mathematics which made him famous ; and Epicurus himself might declare the knowledge of celestial phenomena to be either useless or unattainable a few years before Archimedes and Hipparchus measured the volume of the earth and the approximate distance of the moon ;<sup>1</sup> but yet a certain amount of science is indispensable, so as to make head against foolish superstition. Almost the chief endowment of the Epicurean sage must be a knowledge of nature, for “without physical knowledge our very pleasures are tainted.” Religion has been, as Lucretius afterwards said, the chief cause of the greatest evils ; and it is only possible to checkmate religion by science.

What then is to be our view of natural operations ? what is the character of this saving and enfranchising physics ? Epicurus’s scheme is a strictly materialistic one, for the details of which he is mainly indebted to Democritus. All life is material, some form of body being at the base of all existence. The ultimate elements of nature are not the so-called elements which Empedocles made his *στοιχεῖα*. Fire, earth, air, and water are, in fact, not simple bodies at all, but complex aggregates, which can be divided into something more primordial and original. At the base of things scientific analysis reveals two elements, atoms and void, both of which are infinite ; and the beginnings of creation are due to the infinite atoms falling through infinite space, collecting and aggregating themselves here and there and forming worlds, life meaning the collection of atoms, death their

<sup>1</sup> Cf. M. Guyau’s *La Morale d’Épicure*, p. 185. He there compares Epicurus’s incuriousness with that of Auguste Comte. Cf. too Cic. *Acad.* ii. 33. 106 ; *Fin.* i. 6. 20.



dispersion.<sup>1</sup> Even the soul is really material, formed out of atoms which are indeed finer and rarer than those which go to the creation of other substances, but still essentially material in their structure.<sup>2</sup> Atoms have only primary qualities, shape, size, and weight ; other qualities of taste or colour are only subjective and secondary.<sup>3</sup>

But before we get so far as this, the question naturally occurs as to the capacities of the human mind for ascertaining the truth about nature. What is the criterion of truth ? Sensation, αἴσθησις, is the answer of Epicurus. In that part of his philosophy which answers to Logic, and which in his terminology is τὸ κανονικόν, he is very explicit on this matter. "The criteria of Truth are sensations :—There is nothing which can convict sensations of error ; neither a similar sensation, for similar sensations have an equal value ; nor yet different sensations, for they refer to different objects ; nor yet reason, for reason itself is constructed out of, depends upon, sense (πᾶς γὰρ λόγος ἀπὸ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἡρτῆται)."<sup>4</sup> How then does error arise, for it is obvious that hallucinations, for instance, and dreams, are real ? It arises, not in the sensation itself, but in our inference from the sensation. The actual sensation of a ghost which a nervous man sees is real and indubitable ; the mistake arises when he draws the inference that what he sees has a real existence outside him. Yet go beyond mere sensation we must ; for how else are we even to attempt to interpret for ourselves the constitution of nature ? Epicurus feels the necessity, but is not very scientific in his theory of the processes founded

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 39, 40, 41.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 63.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 44.<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* x. 31, 32.

on sensation. There are *προλήψεις*, he says, which are notions founded on repeated sensations, and *δόξαι*, which are opinions, and *λόγος*, which is ratiocination. The whole process seems to go on naturally, without any idea of the activity of mental construction. Every body throws out *εἰδωλα*, images of itself, and these images may come differently to different men—not that the thing itself changes, but that the images, which men see of it, are different. Hence, as Protagoras said, what seems to a man to be true is true for him, and yet there is a real objective truth, as well as subjective opinions. But how in any given case are we to know that we have got hold of the true image? Here Epicurus fails us; whether he falls back upon the Democritean dogma that there is a true knowledge of the intelligence, as well as a false knowledge of mere sense-impression, or whether he cuts the knot by the assertion that the images of the wise man are always true. In each case the solution is more than unsatisfactory; and in this failure, the whole theory of nature, so far transcending the mere impressions of sense, is involved in uncertainty and doubt.

But this is after all a logical or metaphysical difficulty, antecedent to the study of nature. There is, however, another of a more practical nature which the Epicurean system of physics has to meet. If everything in nature goes by fixed and unalterable laws, is not man too bound in the links of an iron fate? For man is, according to the materialistic position, part of nature, his body formed of the grosser atoms and his soul of the finer. And if so, what becomes of human happiness before the rigid laws of Necessity? For Fate, too, as

well as superstition, is a stern schoolmaster, driving us in ways which do not make for our peace. How can man's freedom, on which his happiness seems to depend, be secured side by side with that regularity of natural law which is to banish superstition? Here Epicurus's theory, judged by a modern standard, becomes almost puerile. The atoms, according to him, have a certain wilful spontaneity of their own; they do not descend in parallel lines: they swerve aside, self-moved, and in this power of the atoms to deviate from the perpendicular, Epicurus finds the origin of human free-will.<sup>1</sup> This is the celebrated doctrine of the "clinamen," which Lucretius expounds at length, and which Cicero covers with ridicule.<sup>2</sup> It may be, of course, that we have not as yet got the theory in its true outlines. Recent fragments from Herculaneum throw, according to Professor Gomperz of Vienna, clearer light upon this much-vexed question. "From these fragments there arises a series of deductions which, it seems to me, are indubitable. Epicurus was not, as has been hitherto supposed, an Indeterminist; he was an opponent of Fatalism, not of Determinism: he did not believe in the causelessness of human acts of will; for, like Voltaire and others, he believed that man to be morally free whose actions were determined by his own opinions: he avoided, like the best thinkers of our day (like Mill, Grote, or Bain), the use of the word Necessity in the processes of the will, as a misleading expression. Like these philosophers, he held that it was unsuitable to denote the efficacy of

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *de Solert. Anim.* 7, ὅπως τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῶν μὴ ἀπόλῃται.

<sup>2</sup> M. Guyau, in his *La Morale d'Épicure*, defends the doctrine. See pp. 71-103.

irresistible causes, and the efficacy of all causes generally by one and the same expression. Finally, his theory of the will was coloured by that doctrine of knowledge which was peculiar to him and to Democritus. The problem evidently culminates with him in the question—How can an act of will through an image (εἰδωλον) from without (the antecedent of every perception and mental representation) be excited and determined by the collection of our convictions, *i.e.* (in his sense) our whole personality?"<sup>1</sup> Whatever may be the exact opinions of Epicurus on this matter, two things are clear—First, that he declared (as against the Stoics) that such a thing as Fate did not exist (τὴν εἰμαρμένην ὑπὸ τινων δεσπότην εἰσαγομένην πάντων μὴ εἶναι): secondly, that freewill in man was necessary to insure the validity of moral distinctions (τὸ δὲ παρ' ἡμῶν ἀδέσποτον· ᾧ καὶ τὸ μεμπτὸν καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον παρακολουθεῖν πέφυκεν).<sup>2</sup>

Even though a man should disbelieve in Fate, he yet may believe in the influence of the Divinity upon human affairs, and the Divine influence may chance to be male-

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Bruchstücke Epikur's insbesondere über die Willensfrage*, von Th. Gomperz (Wien, 1876), pp. 9-11. The fragments in question are those marked 8 and 9 in the list given above. [Pap. 1056; Coll. prior x. 697; Coll. alt. vi. 55, seq.] Here is a fragment tolerably easy to follow, as restored by Professor Gomperz:—

οὐ (δὲ) ἀπολείπει τὰ πάθη τοῦ γίνεσθαι νουθε(τ)εῖν  
τε ἀλλήλους καὶ (μ)άχεσθαι καὶ μεταρρυθμίζειν (sic)  
ὡς ἔχοντας καὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὴν αἰ(τ)ίαν καὶ οὐχὶ  
ἐν τῇ ἐξ ἀρχῆς μόνον συστάσει καὶ ἐν τῇ τοῦ  
περιέχοντος καὶ ἐπεισιόντος κατὰ τὸ αὐτόματον  
ἀνάγκη(ι). εἰ γὰρ τις καὶ τῷ νουθετεῖν καὶ τῷ  
νουθετεῖσθαι τὴν κατὰ τὸ αὐ(τό)μα(τ)ον ἀνάγκην  
προ(σ)ν(έ)μοι.—Pap. 1056, 21, and Pap. 697, D, 1.

Cf. too *Die Ueberreste eines Buches von Epikur περὶ φύσεως* (Gomperz, Wien, 1879), which adds to the foregoing. Also Fr. Bahnsch (*Philolog. Anzeiger* 1878, Nr. 5, Art. 73).

<sup>2</sup> Diog. x. 133.



volent. In the thoughts of many of the Greeks, the godhead was not free from envy ; and human happiness, if prolonged for many years, was sure to bring down the gods' displeasure. Even though such definite maleficent purpose were wanting, yet in the action of the godhead there was something at once irresponsible and incalculable, which would make the Epicurean "serenity" difficult to realise. What then does Epicurus bid his followers think about the gods? "In the first place," he says, in the letter to Menoeceus, "you must think the god to be a being incorruptible and blessed, according to ordinary notions on the subject : attribute to him nothing which is inconsistent with his incorruptibility, or inappropriate to his blessedness, but think about him everything which is true to that union of happiness and immortality which he enjoys. For gods there veritably are, because our idea of them is clear. But they are not what most people think them to be ; and the atheist is not he who destroys the gods of the people, but he who attributes the fancies of the people to gods."<sup>1</sup> And again : "The blessed and immortal deity neither feels trouble nor causes trouble ; he feels no anger, nor is he moved by flattery : for all such feelings indicate weakness" (*ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ γὰρ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον*).<sup>2</sup> On the one hand, then, if the gods are really happy, they can have nothing to do with the troubles of the world ; on the other hand, if they have nothing to do with human affairs, men need not be afraid of their interference. Thus the very condition of happiness in the gods secures

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 123, ἀσεβής δὲ, οὐχ ὁ τοὺς τῶν πολλῶν θεοὺς ἀναιρῶν, ἀλλ' ὁ τὰς τῶν πολλῶν δόξας θεοῖς προσάπτων.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 139.



the inviolability of human happiness. The gods, infinite in number, live in happy ease in the intervals which separate the infinite worlds.<sup>1</sup> They are in stature like men, composed of very fine atoms; they eat food, and thus repair the ravages of time; they are male and female; and Philodemus, according to a Herculean fragment, has the hardihood to assert that they speak something like the Greek language.

It is at the least doubtful how far Epicurus himself would assent to all these predications about the godhead which were certainly rife in his school. It would savour too much of that "attributing of the fancies of the people to gods," which, in his own fine phrase, constituted the character of the real atheist. But, whatever may be the mental reservations or *nuances* of thought involved, Epicurus undoubtedly asserted that the gods exist, for the notions we have of them (based on sensations) are clear, and clearness is to him, as well as to Descartes, the test of truth. Perhaps the images of them which are found in men's minds are due, as Democritus thought, to the fact that while all objects, distant as well as near, send off εἶδωλα of themselves, the intervening medium of air distorts and magnifies the images received by the senses. Perhaps they were mere ideals of human life and happiness, for Epicurus in one passage declares that they were only to be apprehended by reason—λόγῳ θεωρητοὺς εἶναι.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Epicurus was after all, in this respect, somewhat of a hypocrite, according to the judgment of Posidonius. This much at least

<sup>1</sup> τὰ μετακόσμια, intermundia.

<sup>2</sup> Diog. x. 139. Lucian makes Epicurus an atheist; cf. the *Bis accusatus*, *Zeus Tragoedus*, 22, and *Icaromenippus*, 32.

is certain, that, whatever the gods were, they were not to be allowed to interfere either with the reign of law in the natural world, or with the happiness of the Epicurean wise man. The Epicureans might worship at the temples, and a Diocles might feel the grandeur of Zeus himself increased by the sight of an Epicurus on his knees;<sup>1</sup> but Zeus was no longer to be the cloud-compeller, the lord of heaven and earth: he might retain his majesty, but he must lose his terrors.

Yet, even so, the possibility of worshipping such gods demands greater self-forgetfulness in the wise man than Epicurus allows him. It is a remark of Seneca, that although Epicurus banished disinterestedness from morality, he yet allowed it a place in the worship of the gods.<sup>2</sup> What reason could induce a man who was persuaded that his own pleasure was his only object in life, to worship gods who had nothing to do with the course of the world? What good could he get from them? what evil could he avert by his bended knees? And if nothing could be gained from such an act, what inducement was there for a man to perform it? The same difficulty occurs in the Epicurean theory of friendship. Friendship, like every other external relation, must in such a system be ultimately based on its advantages. 'Ἡ φιλία διὰ τὰς χρείας, says Epicurus, although he adds that a great part of the resulting advantage is the sense of community in enjoyment. Yet, however selfish in origin, friendship appears eventually to figure as a highly disinterested virtue—Epicurus in this view of the subject resembling the ordinary modern Utilitarian. Hardly

<sup>1</sup> Acc. to M. Guyau, *La Morale d'Épicure*, p. 178. <sup>2</sup> Senec. *de Benef.* iv. xix.

any friendships, moreover, were more celebrated than the Epicurean, as Cicero remarks ; and hardly any words were too strong to recommend it. "Of all the things which wisdom provides for the happiness of a lifetime by far the greatest is friendship."<sup>1</sup> And so high a view has Epicurus of the society of friends, that he expressly discountenances the Pythagorean formula of friendly communism. A professed communism argues distrust, and distrust is the ruin of friendship.<sup>2</sup> When we consider the selfish origin of friendship, it is not surprising to learn that the later Epicureans were much exercised with regard to the proper interpretation of the phenomenon.

One more obstacle to happiness remains, the most difficult yet the most necessary to remove. The awful shadow of death lies across men's lives, quenching not only enthusiasm but serenity in the fear of impending pain and absolute annihilation. How is a man to bear up against so inevitable a future ? How is the delicate plant of human happiness to thrive in such an undermined soil ? Some of Epicurus's best sayings have reference to death. "Accustom yourself," he tells Menoeceus, "to think that death has nothing to do with us, since every good and every evil depends on sensation, and death is the absence of sensation. Whence it comes that the true knowledge that death has nothing to do with us makes what is mortal in life really enjoyable, not because it adds to life immortality, but because it takes away our longing for immortality. For there is nothing which can terrify a man in life,

<sup>1</sup> Cic. *Fin.* i. 20. 65 ; *ibid.* ii. 25. 80.

<sup>2</sup> τὸν τε Ἐπίκουρον μὴ ἀξιῶν εἰς τὸ κοινὸν κατατίθεσθαι τὰς οὐσίας, καθάπερ τὸν Πυθαγόραν, κοινὰ τὰ τῶν φίλων λέγοντα· ἀπιστούντων γὰρ εἶναι τὸ τοιοῦτον· εἰ δ' ἀπίστων, οὐδὲ φίλων.—*Diog.* x. 11 ; cf. *ibid.* 148.

when he is assured that there is nothing terrible in the absence of life. So that he is a fool who tells us to fear death, not because its presence will torment us, but that its anticipation torments us. For that which troubles us not when it is come, has but vain terrors when it is looked forward to. Death, then, the most awful of ills, is nothing in our eyes; for when we are, death is not, and when death is, we are not.”<sup>1</sup> But fear is not to be exorcised by sophisms, and the question still presses for an answer, Are not our pleasures ruined by the prospect of death? No, answers Epicurus, for pleasure is not made pleasure by continuance, it is whole and entire in every pleasurable moment. Pleasure is still pleasure, happiness is yet happiness, even though it be doomed to an inevitable death. “Time, whether limited or unlimited, involves an equal amount of pleasure, if a man measures it by reason.”<sup>2</sup> Can this consideration, then, help the Epicurean, that pleasure is pleasure, whether it is fleeting or permanent, whether it comes once or lasts a lifetime? Yet, when we remember that it was only by means of the idea of continuance that Epicurus overcame the *μονόχρονος ἡδονή* of the Cyrenaics, that the pleasure he recommended was precisely not the pleasure of any given moment, but that pleasure which could last and become a permanent possession, even this consolation breaks down. Here once more, in the case of death, as in the case of fate, freewill and the gods, the higher philosophy of Epicurus is found too wide for his foundation, and mental serenity, the Epicurean ideal of life, can only be gained at the expense of Epicurean logic.

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 124.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 145.



After all, one has to turn away from the system, in order to reconstitute one's notion of the man. We think rather of the kindly and genial teacher, realising the "rus in urbe" in his Athenian garden, and surrounded by his friends, the faithful Metrodorus, Polyænus, the converted mathematician, Hermarchus the future successor, above all, the little Epicurus and his sister, Metrodorus's children. There are no asperities about Epicurus, no angular points of chagrin or disappointment, or baffled hopes. He is as much above his professed opinions as the ordinary man is below them. His system may require a selfish account of friendship, yet he can say, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."<sup>1</sup> His theoretic view of death forces him to deny it any terrors; yet he knows the full value of life, and can administer a stern rebuke to the pessimist (perhaps Hegesias, ὁ περὶ θάνατος) of his own day. "He who admonishes a youth to live well, and an old man to die well, is a fool; but far worse is the man who says, 'It is well not to have been born, and, when born, it is best to die.' For if he means what he says, why not die at once? It is quite open to him to do so. But if he is jesting at us, he is frivolous on subjects which do not admit of jest."<sup>2</sup> Epicurus might despise superstition, yet he felt that fatalism was more morally ruinous. "It were better to follow the myths about the gods than be a slave to the fate of the physicists."<sup>3</sup> Seneca, who felt

<sup>1</sup> τὸ εὖ ποιεῖν ἡδίων ἐστὶ τοῦ πάσχειν.—Plut. *Non posse suav. viv.* 15. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Diog. x. 126, 127; cf. Soph. *Œd. Col.* 1225.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 134. So again a man's happiness is not to be imperilled by a belief in luck and chance. "Little indeed is the power which fortune has over a wise man, for the main interests of life have been, are, and will be



all the attractions of the Epicurean system, has preserved for us another saying of Epicurus, which has quite a modern sound: "Initium salutis est notitia peccati"—the knowledge of sin is the first step in reform.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, there is much modern quality in Epicurus. Besides that doctrine of Utilitarianism, which fathers so much modern philosophical thought, there is his belief in progress and the slow results of Time. "We must admit," he says, "that the nature of man is in many respects forced and schooled (διδασθῆναι τε καὶ ἀναγκασθῆναι) by circumstances. Reasoning afterwards perfects nature's lessons, and adds thereto new discoveries, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, sometimes in long periods of time, practically infinite."<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to find in any other Greek writer so explicit a statement as this of the effects of Time on human development. Or again, there is his theory of justice, which anticipates Hobbes and Locke and Rousseau: "Justice is nothing in itself, apart from human societies:—Justice is the token of a common interest, a contract not to wrong or to be wronged."<sup>3</sup> Or, once more, there is the natural origin attributed to Language (by no means the ordinary Greek idea), which is said to be neither a divine creation nor an artificial product, but which both Epicurus and Lucretius explain as due to the natural emission of sounds expressive of sensations and ideas.<sup>4</sup>

ordered by Reason" (c. 144). And again: "Chance does not give us good and ill, but only the beginnings whence good or ill may come" (c. 134).

<sup>1</sup> Senec. *Ep.* 28, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Diog. x. 75; cf. Lucret. v. 1452:—

Usus et impigrae simul experientia mentis

Paulatim docuit pedetentim progredientes.

<sup>3</sup> Diog. x. 150.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 75; Lucret. v. 1027.

But Epicurus's chief merit is undoubtedly found in the simple, practical, and unaffected morality which he inculcated both by precept and example. As a summary of the philosophy of life the following maxims are not unworthy to be reckoned with the thoughts of greater men than the Gargettian sage:—"The injuries which come to men either through hatred or envy or pride, the wise man will conquer by reason. He will acknowledge the power of feelings and passions, but will not thereby be hindered in his wisdom. Even though he be tortured, he is yet happy, albeit that at times in his torture he will moan and groan.<sup>1</sup> It is the wise man only who can feel affection for his friends, whether present or absent. He will not punish his servants, but will be compassionate, and pardon those who are worthy. No wise man will fall in love, nor believe that Eros is heaven-sent. Nor will he be a good orator. At times a sage will marry and beget children; at times, if circumstances be adverse, he will not marry, and will try to dissuade others. He will neither cherish wrath in drunkenness, nor will he engage in politics, nor become a tyrant, nor yet flatter. Neither will he beg. Even though bereft of eyes, the wise man will still have a hold on life. He will feel grief: he will think about property, he will provide for the future. He will be fond of a country life, and bear a stout front against fortune. Only so far will he think of repute amongst men, that he be not contemned. More than others he will feel delight at the theatre. It is only the wise man who will have a right opinion on music and poetry; yet the sage lives poems, and does not make them. Money he will make,

<sup>1</sup> As against the Stoical endurance of pain.

yet only in wisdom, if he be in want. He will court a monarch at the proper moment ; he will humour a man, in order to correct him. He will found a school, but not to gain crowds of scholars. He will give his opinion freely, and never be at a loss ; in his dreams he will be true to himself. And sometimes he will die for his friend.”<sup>1</sup>

Epicurus has had many resurrections ; his spirit has lived again in Gassendi, in La Rochefoucauld, in Saint-Evremond, in Helvetius, and in Jeremy Bentham. Perhaps this fragment from Saint-Evremond may be most fitly compared with the summary of virtue just quoted from Epicurus :—

“ He is a philosopher who keeps aloof alike from superstition and from impiety ; an Epicurean, whose distaste for debauchery is as strong as his appetite for pleasure ; a man who has never known want, but at the same time has never enjoyed affluence. He lives in a manner which is despised by those who have everything, envied by those who have nothing, appreciated by those who make their happiness and their reason agree. In his youth he hated waste, being persuaded that property was necessary to make a long life comfortable. In his age he cares not for economy, feeling that want is little to be feared, when one has but a little time left to want in. He is grateful for the gifts of nature, and finds no fault with those of fortune ; he hates crime, endures error, and pities misfortune. He does not try to find out the bad points of men in order to decry them, but he looks for their foibles in order to give himself amusement ; is secretly rejoiced at the knowledge of these foibles, and would be still more pleased to make them known to

<sup>1</sup> Diog. x. 117-121.

others, did not his discretion forbid. Life is to his mind too short to read all sorts of books, and to load one's memory with all sorts of things at the risk of one's judgment. He devotes himself not to the most learned writings, so as to acquire knowledge, but to the most sensible, so as to strengthen his understanding. At one time he seeks the most elegant to refine his taste, at another the most amusing to refresh his spirits. As for friendship, he has more constancy than might be expected from a philosopher, and more heartiness than could be looked for even in a younger and less experienced man. As for religion, he thinks justice, charity, and trust in the goodness of God of more importance than sorrow for past offences."<sup>1</sup>

Such too was the Epicurean sage ; not a hero, not a statesman, not even a philosopher, but a quiet, humane, and prudent man,—“a hero,” as Seneca says, “disguised as a woman.” Epicureanism was undoubtedly not a speculative success, but as a practical code of life it suited the world far more than its rival, Stoicism, and lasted longer. It could not produce martyrs,<sup>2</sup> or satisfy the highest aspirations of mankind, but it made men fall back on themselves, and find contentment and serenity in a life at once natural and controlled. *Λάθε βιώσας*, Live in secret, was the Epicurean watchword. “Keep my words,” said Epicurus, “and meditate on them day and night, by yourself or with your friend, and you shall live as a god amongst men. For there is nothing mortal about a man who lives in the midst of immortal good.”

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in George Saintsbury's article on Saint-Evremond, *Fortnightly Review*, July 1879.

<sup>2</sup> M. Guyau, however, says that Vanini, who had his tongue cut out, and was burnt at Toulouse in 1619, was a martyr for the sake of Epicureanism.—*La Morale d'Épicure*, p. 192. He is usually called a Peripatetic.



### III.

## THE FAILURE OF BERKELEY'S IDEALISM.

It is difficult to preserve the critical spirit in dealing with Bishop Berkeley. For if he fails to touch us with his thought, he wins our hearts with his life ; or, if we shut our eyes to the idealism of his career, we cannot resist the charm of his style. For Berkeley was a great personality, and he was also a great master of style. We are familiar in modern English works on philosophy with men who remain to us mere names, or abstract specimens of special doctrines, because, either from inability or carelessness, they can never write English prose. It may be that they are trained too much in the turns and expressions of foreign thought ; it may be that they are too easily content with the comfortable doctrine that their special subject, be it metaphysics or science, demands a special jargon of its own. The melancholy fact remains, that since the days of Berkeley and Hume, we have not had an English philosopher who combines the gifts of thought and expression, so as to invest a philosophical system with the grace of a classical style.

The contrast between Bishop Berkeley and his



contemporary, Bishop Butler, is significant in this respect. Both full of speculative instincts, both strongly averse to the prevailing philosophy, with points of contact in their respective writings which any student can find, their minds were yet formed in different moulds. Berkeley's mind was rather subtle than deep; Butler was possessed of a solid force in reasoning which made his early letters to Clarke really unanswerable, and his *Analogy* such a model of argumentation. While Berkeley was cheerful, often humorous and playful, as many of his letters show, there is a seriousness or grimness about Butler which makes one easily understand that natural cast of gloominess which he is said to have possessed. And, finally, as the best reflex of their character, we have their respective styles in composition. Berkeley, wonderfully clear and lucid, with much grace and perspicuity of writing, moves with masterly ease in philosophical, and indeed every kind of, prose. Butler, deep, tortuous, and rugged, is like an artist trying in vain to make the unmanageable marble respond to his conceptions. The result is that while quite half the interest of Berkeley consists in his life, the whole interest of Butler consists in his contributions to thought, and that, while Butler is perhaps the deeper theologian, Berkeley is the more interesting man.

But we are not concerned with the lights and shades of Berkeley's dialectic or his life, nor yet with those two great and ideal enthusiasms round which his active life centred. Much philosophical importance may indeed be attributed to some of the incidents and accidents of

Berkeley's design for a University in the Bermudas, and also to his strange passion for tar-water, together with its affiliation to the *Anima Mundi*. But for us the Bermuda scheme only has interest as being the occasion for some admirable philosophical dialogues, and the bishopric of Cloyne is valuable merely as the temporal condition of the publication of *Siris*. Our task is essentially a critical one. Berkeley is the earliest of the modern Idealists. In what sense is he successful, and where does he fail? Is his Idealism a system which commends itself to the modern logician, or is it the cruder, more primitive form, which contains the germ, rather than the realisation, of rational Idealism? Let us anticipate the answer and put the conclusion in one dogmatic sentence. Berkeley is right so far as he is an Idealist; wrong, so far as his Idealism is built on sensations rather than on reason.

The great triumph of modern speculation is, as Mr. G. H. Lewes reminds us, the doctrine that "the world arises in consciousness." The uncritical judgment, whether of early philosophers or of ordinary individuals, is that everything exists as it is perceived. The first problem which philosophy seeks to solve is always, "What is the world in which we live?" The analytical impulse comes later with its question as to the relation in which we stand to the world around us. The earliest tendency is to enumerate the so-called qualities of things, as though by such enumeration we could reach not only a nominal definition, but the essential reality of the things themselves. It is only later that the problem is started as to the mode in which we may be

said to know anything at all. First came the Ionic physicists with their assured and dogmatic materialism : only in a second era of philosophic thought could the Sophists arise with their dogmas of "relativity" and "subjectivity." In essentially the same positions stood the Materialists of the school of Locke and their professed antagonist, Bishop Berkeley. It is of course only from the standpoint of historical philosophy that any such comparison can justly be made. Berkeley was avowedly an apologist for the Christian religion, while the Sophists were sceptics in religion as well as in morality ; but this is only one among the many illustrations which history affords of the irony of circumstances : the necessities of thought, like the ruder, more commonplace necessities of life, make philosophers acquainted with strange bed-fellows.

The doctrine that the world arises in consciousness is capable of many illustrations, and even of many meanings. We may attain to it by different lines of thought, and carry its consequences either into an extreme of Scepticism, or an extreme of dogmatic Idealism. To Berkeley the doctrine simply meant that ✓ all that is real is mere feeling, a position which Hume, with perfect logical consistency, converted into blank Pyrrhonism. To the thinkers of a later German school, the doctrine means that the real is the work or product of active thought, which may issue in an imposing metaphysical structure of Absolute Idealism. The procedure of Berkeley's analysis was conditioned by the system of his predecessor Locke. What can we say is 'real'? what can we affirm to be 'objective,' in the

sense that it exists outside us and away from us, whether we are there to perceive it or no? When we describe any object—say a rose,—as red and sweet and soft, do these attributes of ours describe the real objective qualities of a real thing? Clearly not; we are of course only using words which have immediate reference to our organs of touch, and smell, and eyesight. But is the same the case with qualities like singleness, length, breadth and resistance? Yes, for even in these affirmations we are still describing the object as it appears to us, not as it is in itself. Can we ever then attain to ‘the objectively real’? No; not if by that ambiguous phrase we mean to describe an existence apart from, and without relation to, our consciousness. All our language about externality is expressed, so to speak, in terms of internality. We cannot get outside of the circle of *our* sensations, *our* perceptions, *our* constructive understanding. The result of such an analysis is now become a philosophic truism. Human knowledge is relative, not absolute. We do not know noumena; we only know phenomena.

The full consequences of the analysis were not, however, known to Berkeley himself. Just as Parmenides the Eleatic had discovered that the only truth of a thing resides in the affirmation *ἐστὶ*, without caring to discover what the *ἐστὶ* implied, so Berkeley was content with saying that we know no more of an object than what our senses tell us, because such an assertion gave him a ready and efficacious weapon against the Materialists. For, if we know no more of objects than our successive feelings, what becomes of Matter? Where shall it be



found ? In the so-called secondary qualities of things ? But these are clearly subjective determinations of sense. In the primary qualities ? But these are also attributes, which merely have reference to our consciousness. In our idea of substance ? But even Locke allowed this to be a fiction of thought. Matter, then, is nowhere : apart from ourselves and our feelings it is inconceivable. Only spirits exist.

In a modern world we, too, are familiar with a dogmatic Materialism. We are told that humanity is a development from matter ; that our conscious modes are either the effects of, or identical with, molecular change ; that mind has a physical basis, and is a function of body. And in proof of such assertions, there stands the imposing fabric of Science, which works in Matter, and conjures with Matter as its divining-rod. As long as we shrink from pressing home the metaphysical difficulty as to Matter, so long will the wonderful successes of Physical Science blind our eyes to the first, the greatest, the initial difficulty of all Materialism. If mind be a function of body, its laws will be cases of the laws of body. But how can you pass from mind to body ? How can that which you know as a sensation be to you a material change of particles ? Is not consciousness a unique phenomenon ? The answer will perhaps be that science is always stepping boldly where logic says it cannot move. Heat is one thing, motion is another : yet science says that heat is a mode of motion. But the answer only leads us to a graver difficulty. It clearly admits the inexplicableness of the problem : it only takes refuge in a position such as perhaps Hume

first assumed,—the inexplicableness of all relations of cause and effect. But will science admit the inexplicableness of all natural occurrences? If it does, the whole cause of Materialism, as a dogmatic system, is for ever lost. It may be that Materialists refuse to meet the difficulty; it may be that Materialists are more of sceptics than they choose to admit. Very possibly, their tacit, unexpressed opinion is that matter, as we know it, is not, as it is professed to be, the fountain-head, the source, the ultimate solution of all problems of Nature. The scientists, at all events, proceed on the supposition that it is the solution, or else, taking refuge in the positive sciences, wait to see if they can throw, in the long-run, some light on the *πρώταρχος ἄτη*. But for philosophic critics the conclusion is clear. The analysis, begun by Berkeley, is incontrovertible. Consciousness cannot be explained out of material movements. To attempt to show that it can, is to try to put the cart before the horse,—to evolve Shakespeare out of a Hottentot.

The characteristic merit of Berkeley is, as we have said, to have begun that process of metaphysical argumentation which for ever renders Materialism, as a philosophical system, impossible. But it was only the initial stages over which he travelled, and he leaves us with a doctrine of Sensationalism, eked out by a religious presupposition of God. The analysis of knowledge had affirmed this much: that our acquaintance with external things is only a sense-given picture, or, to put it in other words, that the chasm between all that

we feel, and objects as they are in themselves, is a great gulf fixed. But this merit, at all events, is shared by Hume, the sceptic : the further merit that Berkeley had provided the religious feelings with a new and cogent argument for the reality of a Providence, is found on examination to be illusory. For God is, in Berkeley's system, a veritable *Deus ex machinâ*, brought in as a presupposition of faith to cut the knot, just where the greatest intricacy prevails, to surmount by a *salto mortale* the chasm between Feeling and Faith, between Knowledge and Theology. In truth, the main defect of Berkeley is his Sensationalism : the interest of his philosophy gathers round the fact that with him Sensationalism is trying to get out of itself into a true Idealism. Starting from a purely sensationalistic basis, the system essays to give some account of reality, which, Berkeley says, is God. But there is naturally no bridge to unite a Sensationalism, which is consistent with itself, to a Theism. With Berkeley, all that we can be sure of is just the feeling, or at most, the expectation or suggestion of a feeling. And then, as a matter of faith, we are told that God is the cause of our feelings. But there is no chain of inexorable logic which will connect the one principle with the other.

✓ Let us briefly remind ourselves of the process of Berkeley's thought and its relation to the position of Locke. In Locke's system there was Sensation, with the external object, or Matter, as its proximate cause, and God (possibly) as its ultimate cause. The immediate followers of Locke availed themselves of the unconsciously objective tendency of all Locke's philosophising,

and became Materialists. With them, Reality was Matter, causing Sensation. Now, Berkeley is determined to get rid of this Matter, with the ultimate object of throwing us back on God. Whereas, then, Locke<sup>1</sup> had said that men perceive by the sight, not only colour, but also situation and magnitude, Berkeley's first step is the declaration<sup>2</sup> that sight perceives colour only: it is touch, and touch alone, which reveals situation and magnitude. Does then touch put us in immediate relation with the external world? No, answers Berkeley;<sup>3</sup> in touch we do not get outside of our sensations any more than in sight; we are still within the circle of our own conscious states. What, then, is real? what can we be sure of? Only the sensation; either the present, actual sensation, or the suggestion of possible sensations in the future. In other words, our human consciousness is only a sentient consciousness: the real is mere feeling; and when Berkeley uses the word "idea" in the *Essay on Vision* and the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, he means simply the idea as "feeling," "sensation," not as a work of the creative mind,—though indeed in the *Siris* the word is slipping into its other and more usual connotation.

Now, if what is real is mere feeling, how are we to discriminate between those sensations on which we can rely, and the fancies of our imagination? Berkeley proposes certain tests to which we shall refer later, but the main answer comes to this, that God gives us the one and we give ourselves the other class, God being

<sup>1</sup> Essay II. cap. xiii. sec. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Essay on Vision*, secs. 48, 56, 99, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sec. 44.



thus brought in as a presupposition of Faith. In three sentences, then, Berkeley's destruction of Matter would run thus:—Matter is not feeling, it is a superinduction on feeling: but only the feeling is real: the superinduction, therefore, is a delusion. A fatal difficulty, however, remains. How can a mind make superinductions on feeling, if it is limited to the passive receptivity of feeling, if it is never creative or originaive? If we change the definition of the real, we may perhaps find another and a surer way of proceeding against Materialism. Instead of saying that the real is feeling, let us say that whatever is real is the work of Thought,—Thought which superinduces relations on mere feelings, and raises them into the category of ideas. Matter is such an idea: it is therefore real, it is the work of thought. But it is not real *apart from thought*, as the Materialist would have us believe; it is constituted by thought's own act.

We shall see, in one crucial instance, the difficulties in which Berkeley is involved, owing to his sensationalistic standpoint, in the attempt to explain reality and permanence. Let us take "Space," the foundation of the sciences of Geometry and Physics. Space, for Berkeley, is construed in two ways. There is visible extension and tangible extension, or space as presented by the eyesight, and space as presented by the touch. Let us take each of these in turn.

Visible extension (because, as Berkeley is constantly asserting, the proper object of sight is colour) may be defined as "coloured experience in sense."<sup>1</sup> Now, of

<sup>1</sup> Fraser's *Berkeley*, vol. i. p. 55, "Theory of Vision," note 42.

course (experience in sense means a succession of single feelings, and a single feeling of sight is a mere affection of the visual organ, a nervous irritation. Visible extension then is a succession of single feelings of colour, a succession of nervous irritations. But Berkeley talks also of "situations of colour," and "quantities of coloured points," and treats them as if they were identical with single feelings of colour.) But such expressions as these involve judgments of extensive and intensive quality, and are much more than single feelings. (In reality, from Berkeley's standpoint of feeling, we cannot arrive at the full meaning of space, because extension can never be constituted by a single feeling, or a succession of single feelings.

Still more clearly shall we see this inability to account for extension, when we turn to its other form, tangible extension. Tangible extension can, in similar fashion with space as presented by the eyesight, be defined as resistant experience in sense, and means, for Berkeley, a succession of mere feelings of touch. But what is our idea of Space? Is it not essentially *co-existence* of parts, related to one another, and existing alongside of one another? If Space be defined as mere succession, it is simply not Space at all: the condition of our realisation of Space, is that we conceive that the parts, of which it is composed, co-exist. The conclusion clearly is, that no feelings as such, no "experience in sense," can give us the idea of Space. Space is a mental relation superinduced on the single successive feelings of sense, a synthetic principle, in relation to which the successive experience becomes

what it is not in itself—a co-existence, an unity. But if the validity of such superinductions be denied; if the activity of mind in construing its experience be impugned or explained away, as it was by Locke and Berkeley and Hume, and as it still is by our modern English logicians, Space (to take only one example) is deprived of its essential characteristic; it becomes a mere succession of feelings, and not co-existence of parts.<sup>1</sup>

To see the struggles made in a truer direction, to appreciate the innate tendency of every subjective system of thought to merge itself into a genuine Idealism, we ought first to turn to Berkeley's account of General Propositions, and then to view the generous, though futile, effort to explain the reality of Self and God.

In the question about General Ideas, Berkeley is (generally (and with considerable justice) classed with the Nominalists. He denied the existence of abstract general notions with a fervour which has drawn upon him the enthusiastic encomium of Mill.<sup>2</sup> In some succeeding sections,<sup>3</sup> however, he proceeds to point out what universality consists in. Universality, he tells us, consists not in the absolute positive nature of anything, but in the relation it bears to the particulars signified or represented by it. Thus, for instance, triangularity is a relation of resemblance: in this consists its universality: while a particular triangle is, in its own nature, so much tangible extension, i.e. so much feeling. The point here is to observe how clearly a "relation"

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Green's *Hume*, Introduction, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> See quotation, *Mill on Hamilton*, p. 368; Berkeley's *Introduction to Principles of Human Knowledge*, sec. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* secs. 15, 16.

is distinguished from a mere sensible experience, and it is at least curious to observe that Mill would appear to have limited his perusal of the *Introduction to the Principles* to section 10. Why else should Hamilton be so severely criticised for defining generality as a "relation"? Now, if Berkeley, in making this distinction between a relation and sensible experience, had boldly said that a relation cannot be feeling, and therefore is the work of thought, he would have been far advanced in the positions of Idealism. For it is just because relations are not feelings, are not transitory, that we can argue with such confidence from one individual experience of a triangle to all others of the same kind. But the office of mental relations has a far wider range than Berkeley admitted. To allow of any such argument from one triangle to others of a like kind as the geometers make, Berkeley supposed triangularity to be a relation of resemblance between it and others, and thus to be an universal permanent element. In point of fact, the permanent element, or, in other words, the work of thought, comes before this. It enters into the constitution of a single triangle as such. The mere sensible impression comes and it goes: it leaves nothing permanent behind. Only when the mind brings its superinductions to bear, when, viewing the sensation in relation to others, it affixes its mental stamp, which is formed by relations, does the triangle appear as a definite thing, a permanent element of consciousness. Related to, and differentiated from, other objects of experience, it stands out in independence as one thing. As sensible impression it is here one moment and gone



the next, with all the ebb and flow of a Heracleitean flux, or chaos of change.<sup>1</sup>

Most of all, perhaps, in what Berkeley says of "the Soul," "the Self," "the Ego," does his so-called Idealism reveal its insecurity. Here we come across the weak point in the armour, which was so fatally pierced by the keen lance of Hume. For if Idealism, which pretends to explain the not-Self from the Self, be found to fail in its proof of the Self, then Hume's sarcasm is true as well as biting, that "the writings of the ingenious Dr. Berkeley form the best lessons of scepticism which are to be found either among the ancient or modern philosophers, Bayle not excepted."<sup>2</sup>

The soul, we learn, is immortal, for two reasons. The first of these is one on which Berkeley would not, in all probability, have laid much stress, though it formed a tolerable *argumentum ad hominem* against Locke. Locke had spoken of the soul as "thinking substance," (Descartes' "chose pensante"). But, says Berkeley, substance is matter and is therefore extended, whereas the soul is not extended. While, therefore, extended matter is perishable, unextended spirit is imperishable. The argument is hardly serious, because, if absence of extension be taken as sign or proof of immortality, the scent of a rose, or the sound of the human voice would be immortal. The second proof<sup>3</sup> would appear to be the main one. The soul is immortal, because "time being

<sup>1</sup> In the second edition of the *Principles* we find a tendency in Berkeley to introduce the word "notion," as a sort of relation between sensible impressions or "ideas," a step in the direction of Idealism.

<sup>2</sup> Hume's *Enquiry*, xii. 1, note.

<sup>3</sup> *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sec. 98.

nothing, abstracted from the succession of ideas in our minds," the soul always thinks. For if the soul did not think, there would be no succession of ideas, and therefore there would be no time at all.

Let us see how much such an argument proves. It proves at most that there is an immortality of ideas, or an endless succession of conscious states of feeling. But this cannot prove that the soul is immortal, unless we first prove that there is such a thing as a soul to be the subject of the ideas. In the *Phædo* Plato proves immortality in much the same way. The ideas are eternal, therefore souls, which are the receptacles of them, must be eternal. But have we such an obvious intuition of the existence of an entity, called "soul" or "spirit," that we can at once assume its existence? Or shall we say that a succession of ideas exactly represents the soul? So Mill might say,<sup>1</sup> but Berkeley would certainly not assent to such a position.

How far, however, can we speak of a soul as a separate entity in Berkeley's system? The proof that no such thing as matter exists, depended, we remember, on the assumption that all that is real is present feeling or expected feeling: so that matter-in-itself, which is neither of these, but apart from feeling as its cause, was proved to be inconceivable. We turn to the Soul. If all that is real is feeling, here too present or expected sensations are all that we can affirm to exist. Hence Soul, which exists apart from sensation as its subject, is also inconceivable. But, says Berkeley, a sensation implies a percipient. Why so? In what sense

<sup>1</sup> *Examination of Hamilton*, chap. xii.

more than it implies an external object as its cause? If it be said that a sense-given object, as a separate item in the body of our knowledge, implies a work of thought which transforms the fleeting sense-impression into an intelligible reality, then we get a true Idealistic position; but it is not the position of Berkeley, who practically denies activity to the mind. The fact, of course, is that it is the same system of relations worked by thought, which substantiates the existence of self-consciousness, and substantiates the existence of matter—not indeed matter apart from thought, but matter as constituted by thought. But Berkeley essays an impossible task. It is impossible to admit a reality to be the subject of sensation, and at the same time to deny a reality, which is the object to which sensation is referred.

The same inherent weakness appears in what Berkeley tells us of God. The Divine Being in Berkeley's system plays the same part as Matter does in the system of Locke. Just as Locke explains the existence of "ideas" in us by referring them to a matter outside, which serves as their efficient cause, so Berkeley explains the existence of the self-same ideas, by referring them to God. Ideas in us are the effects of God's power. Now there is no more common distinction than that which we draw in ordinary parlance between real ideas and unreal, between fact and fancy. How, on the lines of Berkeley's thought, can such a distinction be explained? The obvious answer is that real ideas are those which God gives us, unreal ideas are those which in wanton arbitrariness we make for ourselves. But, from the subjective point of

view, arguing from ourselves and the standpoint of our own consciousness, how are we, in the case of a given idea, to decide whether we made it for ourselves, or whether God made it for us,—whether, in short, the idea is real or fanciful? Berkeley's answer is that real ideas have the following characteristics, viz., liveliness, involuntariness, steadiness, order, and coherency. Locke had only spoken of the first two; Descartes had asserted that clearness was an adequate test of trustworthiness. It may at once be said that such qualifications as steadiness, order, and coherency (though the last rather begs the question) form a distinct step in advance of the crude tests of Descartes and Locke, although there may perhaps be ideas, both fantastic and unreal, which are yet steady and coherent.

There seems, however, to be only one way of making the distinction between reality and unreality in our ideas, a way which Berkeley unfortunately did not apprehend. It is this. A feeling, as such, can be neither real nor unreal. Consequently, if Berkeley uses "idea" in the sense of feeling, he can describe it neither as real or unreal, but only as present or absent. Reality and unreality are only predicable of ideas, when they are more than feelings, when they are constructed out of sensations' by the relations imposed by thought. Reality is our word for the normal structure, unreality for the abnormal structure, of the idea by thought-relations. A man, say, sees a ghost. As mere feeling there is no question about the truth. "I tell you," he says, "I saw it with my own eyes." There is no gainsaying the vividness of some present feeling. But if he says such



and such a congeries of sensations is a ghost, he is defying the normal construction of thought, the normal relations under which things are seen. We can therefore say that his vision is an unreal one, that is, it is an abnormal construction, or, in other words, it is a fantasy of subjective organs of sense.

Let us now state categorically the proof, according to Berkeley, of God's existence. It is at all events more cogent, or at least more capable of individual application, than the proof of Locke, which, arguing from something now to something existing from eternity, gives a Pantheistic view of the Divinity. To Berkeley, a first proof of the existence of God is afforded by the existence of Spirit in ourselves, and the necessity of supposing a cause for the ideas of which we are conscious. We saw, however, that from Berkeley's standpoint, we cannot in reality *prove* the existence of Spirit or Soul, we can only prove the existence of a series, or, as Hume would put it, a flux, of sensations. If, then, Berkeley's argument is to stand, we must suppose that by God we mean a series or flux of ideas or sensations. To Mill<sup>1</sup> this may be adequate and sufficient, but not to the ordinary consciousness of religious men. And yet this is all that the argument from Spirit really justifies.

There is, however, another variety of expression in Berkeley's proof of God. We are conscious, we are told, of a personal efficiency within ourselves: that is one kind of "notion": and there must also be in existence some other efficiency to serve as the parent and cause of the ideas which we cannot assign to our own personal effi-

<sup>1</sup> *Examination of Hamilton*, cap. xii.

ciency. But how is it possible to argue from that, of which you are conscious, to that, the essential nature of which is that you are not conscious of it? You are conscious, says Berkeley, of your own personal efficiency; and then (*ex analogiâ hominis*) you infer the existence of another personal efficiency of which you are not conscious. But this is what the logicians call *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*—an argument from consciousness to non-consciousness, which invites the destructive argument of Hume.<sup>1</sup> Or, to put it otherwise, Berkeley's argument against Matter, that it is an abstract or absolute idea and therefore inconceivable, applies equally well to God, who, not being a present sensation, or possible sensation, is also an absolute idea, and therefore inconceivable.<sup>2</sup>

Is it a thankless and ungracious task thus to pull to pieces, by contrasted lines of argument and theory, a great philosophical system? In many ways, yes. It tends to give a totally inverted view of philosophic merit and demerit, and to depreciate the valuable con-

<sup>1</sup> Hume's *Enquiry*, cap. vii.

<sup>2</sup> The following are the main points, where Berkeley, departing from his own sensationalistic standpoint, tends towards a truer Idealism:—

- (i.) In the second edition of *Principles of Human Knowledge* Berkeley speaks of "relations" as not "felt" (not sensations) but "thought" (sec. 89).
- (ii.) In the Dialogues he tends to substitute for the passive "idea" the active "notion."
- (iii.) He seems also to speak of a thing whose "esse" was not "percipi" but "percipere" (cf. *Principles*, sec. 142).
- (iv.) In the third Dialogue he seems to say that the "sensible world" is to God not *felt*, as a series of sensations, but *known*.
- (v.) In the *Siris*, he tries to rise from mere consciousness of sensations to the Perfect Intelligence.

tributions to thought down to the level of the insignificant and valueless. For men are always inclined to judge a system by its weakest links—a judgment which in philosophy is both uncritical and unhistorical. From another point of view, however, such a line of treatment is not only pardonable, but actually necessary. For it is no single unabashed critic who thus passes judgment, but the years that have elapsed since Berkeley first formulated his system. Have these years added nothing to philosophy? The supposition is monstrous. But if it be granted that the years which bring the philosophic mind, bring also the newer standpoint, the clearer judgment, the deeper insight into the conditions of knowledge and truth, then it is no wanton spirit of destructiveness which throws away what is worthless, but the same sober spirit of the age, which also garners in the storehouse of Time the priceless possessions of the human intellect.

#### IV.

### A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORD "CAUSE."

THE word "Cause" has probably had a more curious history than most of the technicalities of science and philosophy. Αἷτιον, ἀρχή, *causa*, causation, causality, are words which raise a multitude of reminiscences, a perfect labyrinth of context. But in this essay, we shall be concerned with the modern opinions on the subject, inasmuch as the problem "*rerum cognoscere causas*," though appreciated in ancient times, has only been deliberately handled within the modern period.

Four characteristic views may conveniently be discriminated which succeeded each other in a tolerably chronological order in the history of philosophy. They may be distinguished as follows :—

1. The answer of Common Sense.
2. Sceptical Analysis.
3. Philosophical Reconstruction.
4. The view of Science—in its earlier and in its later forms.

1. The ordinary, uncritical view of Cause is undoubtedly the idea of some agent exercising a productive power, the result of whose action we term an



Effect. Fire is conceived of as having this power, so as to shrivel paper or melt wax. Snow or rain are supposed to have this power, so as to make men lose their tempers, or their voices, or both. This is precisely the view we find in the earlier part of Locke's *Essay*, Locke being the incarnation of common sense in this, as also in other instances. He tells us<sup>1</sup> that there are three sorts of qualities,—

Primary qualities, such as weight, solidity, hardness, etc.; Secondary qualities, such as sweetness of taste, odour, sound (the first existing in bodies themselves, the second only in the effects of the primary on our bodily organs of sense); and Powers in certain bodies:—powers to produce, such as the sun possesses, when we say it is the cause of warmth.

Here then is one view of causation—the active objective quality of certain objects to produce effects. }

2. But ordinary, uncritical, common-sense views are never proof against the inroads of victorious analysis. As it was in the days of the Sophists, so also was it in the days of Hume. Where are we to find this productive power in bodies? Can we lay our finger on it and say, "I find it in such or such a configuration of primary objective qualities"? But in the first place there are no qualities we assign to objects which we can conclusively say belong to the things themselves. Solidity, weight, hardness, extension, unity, all represent the objects as they appear to us—the aspect they wear to consciousness—not the objects as they are in themselves. }

<sup>1</sup> *Essay* II. c. 8, §§ 2, 3.

And in the second place, Experience tells us nothing of this so-called productive power. It tells us of sequence, it is true, of one thing following another thing, of antecedents and consequents, of a series of events; but where does experience testify to a productive power? If so, by an analysis of the cause, we ought to get the effect. Can we, by analysis of our idea of water, discover that it will choke a man if submerged in it; or of a billiard ball, discover that if impelled against another ball, it will make it move? Nay but, it is answered, the idea of productive power is derived from man's voluntary action. Is there anything more than sequence there also?—sequence of action on motive, of idea on impression? Whether in the objective world, or in the world of Mind, sequence is found, antecedents and consequents are found, but experience gives us no productive agency, no cause. Cause, in this sense, says Hume, is a mental fiction. How then, it may be asked, do you account for what at all events is real, our expectation of a particular consequent when we come across a particular antecedent? That we do so expect is a mere matter of experience. When we put our hands into fire we expect to get burnt. The ground of this expectation, answers Hume, is merely custom. We have got into a habit of experiencing a sequence, that is all. Many experiences go to form a habit, and habit explains our expectancy.

3. When scepticism has broken down our old beliefs, two courses are always open. We may get indignant and rhetorical, perhaps that is the common way; or we may patiently begin the work of a more rational reconstruc-

tion,—and that is, or should be, the way of Philosophy. Both methods were tried with Hume. Rhetoric in abundance was poured forth by the facile pen of Reid and those who are called the Scotch school of common sense. That device we may disregard. The work of reconstruction was the work of Kant. As Polemarchus was succeeded by Thrasy-machus, so Thrasy-machus was overthrown by Socrates.

How much had Hume's analysis proved? It had broken down the theory of an objective relation, named "Productive power," between the so-called antecedent and the so-called consequent. It had proved that the relation was, at most, sequence, and had asserted as a consequence that Cause was a fiction. But what if the real relation entitled Causation was a subjective relation solely, and never had been anything else? Must it follow that it is to be discarded as useless? That can only be on the supposition that all knowledge is valuable so far as it is directly sensible experience. But if the body of knowledge consists very largely of relations, purely mental, which hold together, so to speak, the fluctuating data of sense, the conclusion of Hume, that Cause is a fiction because it is a mental relation, falls to the ground. There are many relations introduced by the mind in the body of knowledge, according to Kant. Substantiality is such a relation, so is Reciprocity, so, in a way, are Time and Space. If Cause be in the same category with these, it is in good company. And so by a deeper psychological analysis Kant turns the edge of Hume's Scepticism. Hume said, Cause is a mental relation and therefore a fiction, and useless. Kant said, Cause is a mental rela-

tion and therefore necessary, because knowledge owes its unity, its intelligibility, and its completeness to such mental relations as these.

The change in the question introduced by Kant is then this. In the first place, the answer to it is made dependent on the general psychological theory of Kant—that in all knowledge and experience there is not only an *a posteriori* factor but also an *a priori* factor—not only the data of sense, but “forms,” “conditions,” and “relations” imposed by thought. And in the second place instead of *Causation* viewed as an external process, we have the category of *Causality*—a category imposed by thought, which converts the idle following of consequent on antecedent into the universality and necessity of the law of Cause. In all our experience of events it is necessary that the order in which they occur should be an irreversible order, if our experience is to be uniform and intelligible, and this is the work of that category of the understanding, called Causality.

4. But Science knows nothing of categories and forms and relations due to an *a priori* action of thought. Experience to Science is limited to Feeling and the symbols and signs which are directly representative of Feeling. And in this matter of “Cause,” Feeling testifies to sequence and nothing more. Yet the modern mouth-pieces of scientific opinion could hardly accept Hume’s position in its naked simplicity. A science of Nature with uniform laws could hardly be content to ground its rigid uniformity on habit and custom. Some additional terms must be added to that definition of Cause, which made it more or less arbitrary Sequence. This is



the work of Mill. Mill defines the Cause as the invariable unconditional antecedent ; and this may be taken as the representative opinion of the earlier form of the scientific view.<sup>1</sup>

There are many points in Mill's exposition which are of incontestably scientific value. For instance, the enlargement of our conception of Cause, so that it involves not one single antecedent, but the sum of positive and negative antecedents. For Cause is in the majority of cases not one single factor, but a number of factors which precede the event. So, too, the definition of Cause as the sum of conditions, and the clear recognition, in some sections of the chapter, that the distinction ordinarily drawn between "conditions" and "the cause" is unphilosophical. To these, too, we may add one of the subordinate points touched on, viz., that it is a mistake to make a clear line of demarcation between the thing acting and the thing acted on—between the agent and the patient. If, for instance, a man be poisoned by prussic acid, it may be convenient in ordinary language to make a verbal distinction between the poison as "an agent," and the nervous system of the individual as "the patient ;" but it is quite clear, scientifically speaking, that the peculiar properties of the nervous system are as much involved in and are as much conditions of the death as the properties of the poison. Unfortunately Mill is not always at the best scientific level of his own language. Two or three points may be mentioned which render his treatment of this question unsatisfactory.

We saw that a cause cannot be really severed from

<sup>1</sup> Mill's *Logic*, vol. i. Bk. III. c. 5.

the conditions of an event ; and yet when the definition of cause is reached—that it is the invariable unconditional antecedent—it is so phrased as expressly to distinguish the cause from the conditions. The two adjectives are both additions to the simple antecedence of which Hume spoke, and both are unfortunate. The word "invariable" simply opens the whole controversy again. For the question which tortures philosophers is exactly this—How far mere sensible experience of phenomena can ever lead to a relation absolutely invariable. Either the word only means "unvaried, so far as experience has gone," or else it is a pretentious mode of expressing that influence of habit on our belief, on which Hume so strongly relied. But "invariable" is not so baffling as "unconditional." To begin with, there is an obvious lack of logical precision of language, when that which before has been defined as the "sum of conditions" is now defined as "unconditional." And when we try to forget this possibly merely verbal inadvertence, and discover what Mill means, the answer is by no means clear. "Unconditional" means either "absence of conditions," or "absence of counteracting conditions." In the first case, the term cannot be applied to causation, since no product can arise in the absence of its factors ; in the second case, its meaning is better expressed by the word "invariable."<sup>1</sup> It is perfectly indisputable that a sequence is invariable, when its antecedent conditions are invariable, only we need not say it over twice. If we look at Mill's instance, it would appear that he meant "absence of

<sup>1</sup> Lewes's *Problems of Life and Mind*, vol. ii. p. 380.

conditions," not "absence of counteracting conditions," for he decides that the orbital movement of the earth is not a case of causation. Why? because it is dependent on the conditions of the sun's attraction (centripetal force), and the tangential movement (centrifugal force), and so involving these conditions is clearly barred by a definition in which the word "unconditional" occurs. But the conclusion itself, that the orbital movement of a planet is not a case of causation, is a most astounding one to meet in a professedly scientific treatise.

Two more points of criticism may be selected. Mill says that the scholastic axiom, "Cessante causa, cessat et effectus," is a fallacy. "*A coup de soleil*," he says, "gives a man brain-fever: will the fever go off as soon as he is moved out of the sunshine?" This passage is written seemingly in ignorance of his own admission that the distinction of agent and patient is purely verbal. Brain-fever is a cumulative result, dependent on many conditions in which the actual state of the patient represents a very large factor. Why should one only of the antecedents (viz., the sun's rays) be singled out as the cause, overlooking all the many concurrent conditions and antecedents absolutely necessary to the result? Another scholastic axiom is stigmatised in severer terms, viz., "*Causa æquat effectum*."<sup>1</sup> But this point, as it leads us on to, and not inaptly expresses, the later phase of scientific opinion on the subject, may be taken conveniently with it.

We have seen that the points in Mill's treatment of Cause, which are scientific, are—

<sup>1</sup> *Examination of Hamilton*, p. 191.

- i. The definition of Cause, as the sum of positive and negative antecedents, or rather the sum of conditions.
- ii. The declaration that it is only possible verbally (though not really) to discriminate between agent and patient.

What is the point with which the later phase of Science we are now examining is dissatisfied, and which it seeks to replace? It is the tendency to regard antecedent and consequent as forming separate phenomena, the one of which comes first, the other last,—the tendency to view Cause as one thing here and now, and Effect as another thing there and then. If Cause and Effect be separate phenomena, then it is quite natural that we should look for some intermediate link to join them. This is the older view, which spoke of Productive power as the connecting link by which the Cause passed into the Effect; this is the view which really explains Hume's sceptical criticism, because objective certainty seemed to go when Hume declared that no such link was forthcoming. This is the view which dominates Mill's attempt to reinstate the link by such adjectives as unconditional and invariable antecedent. But what if Cause and Effect be not two separate phenomena, but only different aspects of one phenomenon?—if Cause and Effect in their separateness be only abstractions, logically distinguishable indeed, but not really divisible? Then under this assumption the necessity of any link to connect them is of course unjustifiable.



The view then of later Science may be thus briefly stated.<sup>1</sup>

Cause always represents the sum of conditions. The relation between Cause and Effect is simply the relation between factors and fact. The factors are of no moment out of their relation to the fact, and Cause is nothing apart from its relation to the Effect. Causation is really nothing but a *procession*, where every link in the chain presupposes its antecedent and postulates its consequent. If we like arbitrarily to divide this chain somewhere and say, "so far is cause and condition, now for the effect," of course we may do so for clearness' sake, but we must never forget that this is at most a logical division not a real one, that for purposes of convenience we are temporarily isolating one part of a continuous phenomenon. Cause and Effect are the convex and concave sides of an arc. In reality Cause and Effect are identical.

The difficulty of this view of the identity of Cause and Effect lies in the compelling force of our ordinary language. There is no doubt that ordinary parlance makes a clear separation between Cause and Effect, and hence it is by no means easy to realise the position indicated. But let us take an example or two; and first a very vulgar example. If we take a lemon, sugar, hot water and whisky, we get grog. It is clear that speaking logically the sugar, hot water, and whisky are the cause of the grog. They are the Cause, the grog is the Effect. But now what is grog? Is it something separate from its conditions? Is it not identical with

<sup>1</sup> Lewes's *Problems of Life and Mind*, vol. ii. Probl. v. c. ii.

them? Is grog anything apart from hot water, lemon, sugar, and whisky? Is it not only another way of regarding one identical phenomenon, whether we order a glass of grog, or order hot water, lemon, sugar, and whisky?

Take another example, which shows why it seems strange to us that Cause should in any way equal the Effect. The administration of mercury on the human frame is followed by paralysis. We ordinarily say, mercury is the cause of paralysis. But how inaccurate this expression is! What is the real process? Mercury must be held in solution by chloride of sodium in the blood before it will pass from the blood to the tissues; even when fluid it will only pass through the walls of the blood-vessels under certain conditions. Then when the mercury has thus reached the tissues, there is a certain "elective affinity" among the tissues, one having the tendency to take up the mercury and so be poisoned, while another has not. Finally, when the tissue has been mercurially poisoned, it is incompetent to carry on the vital activities proper to it, and paralysis ensues. Now, if we want the real cause of paralysis, it is the whole process from the first administration of the mercury to the poisoning of particular tissues; and *this* does not *cause* paralysis, but *is* paralysis. We now see, too, why the old scholastic axiom "*Causa æquat effectum*" seems so absurd to us as well as to Mill. The fact is that we arbitrarily select one of the factors and look upon it solely as the cause; then naturally the whole of the rest of the process appears very unlike this arbitrarily selected factor; but none the less if we enumerate all the factors, we get the effect. If we

say that a spark falling on the wooden floor of one of the rooms in a boat-house destroys the whole boat-house and forty-seven boats stored in it, there is obviously no sort of resemblance or equivalence between this cause and this effect. But in truth the spark is here only the first in the series of conditions, and its effect is limited to the transference of some of its molecular agitation to a few shavings or beams of wood; thence it is transferred to the whole floor, thence to the whole structure and all that it contains. If we limit causation to antecedence and sequence, the destruction of the boats is not the effect of the spark; but if we understand by cause all the factors, the destruction of the boats is their resultant effect.

This view of causation as a *procession* is what really underlies that view of Sir W. Hamilton which so excites Mill's wrath.<sup>1</sup> According to Hamilton, when we believe that a thing has a cause, "we mean that all that now is seen to arise under a new appearance had previously an existence under a prior form." There is thus, he adds, "an absolute tautology between the effect and its cause. We think the causes to contain all that is contained in the effect, the effect to contain nothing which was not contained in the causes. We cannot conceive any new existence to commence."

When Mill in his criticism on this conception says that though Matter does not alter in amount, its forms at all events change,<sup>2</sup> he only says what Hamilton would thoroughly agree with. Hamilton said expressly that the effect was a new appearance of that which as

<sup>1</sup> *Examination of Hamilton*, c. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 351.

condition and cause forms a prior appearance. Or in other words, in the aspect we have just been reviewing, "Cause is nothing but a condensed expression for the factors of any phenomenon, the effect being the fact itself." Cause and Effect are two aspects or sides of one phenomenon.

And now, what view of Nature, as a whole, follows from this mode of treating causation? There is, *First*, a persistent substance. *Second*, a continuous transformation of aspects. The changes are causes: the changed is substance. Cause and Substance, Matter and Force, (understood simply as the changed and the changes,) are the indissoluble elements of every phenomenon.

Must we then assume that this scientific notion of Cause, in many ways preferable to the pseudo-scientific notion of Mill, is preferable also to the view of Kant? Must we give up what seemed the Kantian revelation in view of the mass of collateral evidence furnished by such scientific axioms as the Conservation of Energy and the Indestructibility of Matter? It is quite clear that Mr. Lewes at all events believes that his doctrine of Cause is to supersede any version of "German metaphysics" as well as the views of earlier English philosophers. The old mistake was, according to him, the supposition that Cause and Effect were two distinct things, and hence the imagined necessity of a link to connect the two, whether "power" as with Locke, or "customary association" as with Hume, or "a mental synthesis" as with Kant. There is in reality an equi-



valence and identity between Cause and Effect, the equivalence of arbitrarily divided links in one process, the identity of a concave and a convex aspect of the same arc. The truth is that what we view *now* as a Cause we view *then* as Effect. But if we are thus able to grasp the two sides or aspects in their fundamental identity, what enables us to do this? Not sensible experience, surely: the mind must somehow supply this synthesis between factors and fact, and if so, we are back again in the Kantian notion of a mental synthesis of Causality. Sometimes even the force of language is too great for Mr. Lewes's science: "The something (between the agent and the action) *is the logical synthesis of the co-operant factors*: when the synthesis is known, the mystery disappears,"<sup>1</sup> a sentence which perhaps Kant himself would not disown. In order to elucidate the point, it is necessary to turn back again to Kant's doctrine of Causality—one of the hardest doctrines in the whole "Critique of Pure Reason." The difficulty is this, that while Kant's language appears to indicate one conclusion, the whole tendency of his system emphatically leads to another. Nor is this merely due to the perverse ingenuity of his commentators, for it is a well-known fact that Kant, as Professor Caird remarks, often makes his way into a subject by use of ordinary modes of inquiry, though the result of his inquiry is to lead him beyond those modes.<sup>2</sup> In the "Æsthetic" for instance he lays down the dogma that while the Sensibility gives us objects, the Understanding thinks them; but the whole "Analytic" would be useless,

<sup>1</sup> *Prob.* vol. ii. p. 397.

<sup>2</sup> Caird's *Kant*, p. 225.

if we for a moment supposed that the sensibility could really give us objects, rather than the mere "manifold" of sensation. Perhaps in his explanation of the category of Causality, a similar opposition between discussion and conclusion may be perceived.

The discussion in question is to be found in the second analogy of Experience, under the head of the "Principles of the Pure Understanding." The analogy runs thus: "All changes take place according to the law of the connection of Cause and Effect." Let us attempt to put in simpler words the difficult pages of Kant.

All experience must be successive in a certain sense, yet this succession is not always an irreversible succession. We observe a house; we begin our observations either from the roof down to the foundations, or *vice versa*, from the foundations up to the roof. In either case our observation is successive; and the succession may be reversible. But now let us observe a boat floating down a river. At one moment we observe it high up the stream, and then at another we observe it lower down. Here, too, is an observation which is successive, but is *this* succession reversible? Evidently not. We cannot first observe the boat low down the stream, and subsequently observe it higher up.

Now, what is the difference in these two experiences? Both are successive, but in the one case the succession is reversible, in the other irreversible. What makes the difference? In ordinary language we say that in the latter instance we have an event, an occurrence, something which happens; while in the former case we have

only a permanent state or condition. Whenever, then, we have experience of an event or an occurrence, there the succession is irreversible. But change is applicable to instances of the latter sort: to events and to occurrences; and so we get this result, that in our experience of change of phenomena, the succession of phenomena must be an irreversible one.

But how are we to get this irreversible order of phenomena, if we confine ourselves merely to sensible experience? How, solely on the basis of successive feelings, are we able to make this distinction between a succession which is reversible and one which is irreversible? We clearly cannot. If we are to understand change at all, if our experience of change is to be an intelligible one, we must bring the phenomena, as it were, under some concept which connects them in an irreversible order. Or, in other words, we must connect phenomena by our *a priori* concept of Cause and Effect, if our experience of change is to be an intelligible experience. If the succession of phenomena is to be an irreversible succession, it must be an intelligible one; and it can only be intelligible in the sense that our understanding connects phenomena by a concept of Causality.

Such, very briefly, seems to be Kant's position; and as it is here especially that he opposes Hume and the Empirical theory, we had better compare it with Hume's position in this question.

Hume says that by experience of succession we get into a habit of connecting together antecedents and consequents, and this repeated experience which results in a habit, is all the truth that lies in our notion of Cause.

Now, when Hume says that all that experience gives us is events succeeding one another, Kant agrees with him. Sensible experience is of course successive, and nothing more than mere succession can be got out of experience. ("Synthesis" cannot be given by experience.) But when Hume goes on to say that *therefore* our notion of Cause is a mere fiction, the only truth of which lies in the fact that experience forms a habit, and habit leads to expectation—the expectation, viz., that when we find antecedents we shall afterwards experience consequent,—here Kant disagrees with him; and for this reason: How in a succession are we to tell which is the antecedent and which is the consequent? How are we to be sure that the order of the two events may not be reversed? We have seen that in our successive experience of a house, we can begin at the bottom just as well as at the top. Why is it that in the case of a boat floating down a river, we cannot begin at the bottom of the stream just as well as the top? Because, in the case of an event or an occurrence, the order of our successive experiences is an irreversible one. That is just the point. Why is it an irreversible one? Because, in order to make our experience of an event intelligible, we suppose a necessary antecedent and a necessary consequent; or, in other words, intelligible experience of an event presupposes the category of Causality.

This, then, is just the difference between Kant and Hume. Hume said that because experience only gives succession, therefore our notion of Cause is a fiction. Kant said that inasmuch as experience gives succession,



the notion of Cause must be presupposed to make that succession intelligible. If it were not presupposed, the succession might be reversible; because it is presupposed, it becomes irreversible, and therefore we know that the antecedent must come first and the consequent must come afterwards.

Now, what are we to infer from this discussion as to the proper Kantian view of Causality? It may be said that the view is this:—Experience gives us succession, and the understanding by its category gives us causation. We *see* things follow each other, and we *think* that they are related as Cause and Effect. Thought gives its new version, or rather its correction, to the (imperfect) testimony of the senses. There is much to be said for such a view. Kant's own example of the difference between our perception of a house and of a boat floating down the river seems to corroborate it. Possibly even it may be true to say that here and there Kant himself leant to such a view. But it is not uncritical to discriminate between the Kant of controversy and the Kant of speculation,—between Kant in his polemical moods, and Kant in the systematic evolution of his system. The whole of the discussion clearly presupposes the doctrine of Hume, in antagonism to which it is formulated. Was not Aristotle himself a totally different being when he was criticising Plato and when he was quietly carrying out his own system?

It is quite impossible to believe that such a theory as we have expressed is the genuine Kantian theory. It leaves too wilful a severance between the Sensibility and the Thought of man; it is framed too much on

the lines of the older Philosophy, which the Critique was meant to supersede ; it is capable of too easy a rejoinder. Once admit that sensible experience gives us *a succession of objects*, and it is open to any savant of the type of Mr. Lewes, or any commentator of the stamp of Dr. Stirling,<sup>1</sup> to assert that the further synthesis of thought is wholly arbitrary, captious, and unnecessary. If we have already got objects in sequence, we have got all that Science, or for the matter of that, common sense, requires for the uniformity of the Natural Order. It cannot be, then, that Kant could set his seal to such a view, or rather it cannot be the true version which the whole spirit of the Critique is meant to support. The truth is that sensible experience can never give us objects in succession without the aid of thought. Just as the Analytic teaches us that the understanding alone can present us with real objects, the sensibility giving us only a confusing chaos, so, too, the second analogy of Experience must teach us that it is the understanding alone with its category of Causality which can present us with the uniform sequences of objects in the Natural World. Without it what have we ? By the light of our senses, only a chaos of sensations, coming anyhow, pell-mell, in a dance of confusing phantasms. No order, no real succession, no regularity, and therefore no Nature. We cannot understand succession itself without the category of Causality. For succession means order and regularity ; and the succession of events in order means the Uniformity of Nature. It is

<sup>1</sup> Stirling's *Text-book to Kant*, pp. 101, 455, 489.

not then the fact that we perceive objects in sequence, and then think them in relations of Cause and Effect; but the fact is that it is the category of Causality (a mental synthesis which is *a priori*) which enables us to understand how objects can succeed each other with regularity, which therefore gives us a nature as we know it, and constitutes for us an intelligible experience.<sup>1</sup>

And if this be so, here as elsewhere Kant goes more to the bottom of things than his English critics. Is the stress to be laid on Indestructibility of Matter, on Conservation of Energy? Well, it is Kant alone who shows us how in all changes of phenomena substance is permanent, how its quantum is neither increased nor diminished. Is the real doctrine of Causation maintained to be a *procession* of objects,—a series of changes which we may arbitrarily but not really divide? It is Kant alone that tells us that change and process and succession cannot be understood apart from the synthetic principle of Causality, which introduces regularity, and therefore intelligibility, into our experience, and which, in a real sense, constitutes for us that Nature which is the object of Science.

<sup>1</sup> Here are some sentences in Kant which I conceive to bear this meaning (*Transcendental Analytic*, Second Analogy of Experience)—

"For all experience and for the possibility of experience understanding is indispensable, and the first step which is taken in this sphere is not to render the representation of objects clear, but to render the representation of an object in general possible."—(Meiklejohn, p. 149. Cf. Max Müller's Translation, pp. 174-5.)

"Only, therefore, in reference to a rule, according to which phenomena are determined in their sequence, that is as they happen, by the preceding state, can I make my subjective synthesis (of apprehension) objective, and it is only under this presupposition that even the experience of an event is possible."—(Meiklejohn, p. 146. Cf. Max Müller's Translation, p. 171.)

## V.

### THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY.

NOTHING is more remarkable than the change which has come over the study of psychology in England within the last fifty years. A comparison between the *Study of Psychology* of Mr. George Henry Lewes and the opening chapters of the Sixth Book of Mill's *Logic*, is quite sufficient to establish the reality of the change. It is not so very long ago that Stuart Mill died, Mr. Lewes's death is still fresh upon our minds, and yet the difference in psychological standpoint, and the divergent answers given to the problems with which mental science deals, amount, if not to an absolute revolution, at all events to a development which almost initiates a new order of things. It is true that Stuart Mill's main originality did not lie within the province of psychology : he repeated, with only a few unimportant differences of detail, James Mill's system of the human mind ; but in works like the *Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy*, and in the notes on his father's *Analysis*, his position in this department of science was indicated with sufficient clearness. Comparing these indications with what we know of the modern psychology, it is hardly too much to say that the difference between Mr. Mill and Mr. Lewes is fully as great as that which a



philosophical historian finds between the systems of Hume and Kant. Whereas Mr. Mill treats throughout of Experience as though it meant the proceeds and results of *individual* acquaintance with cosmical facts, Mr. Lewes explains it in a larger sense as the inheritance of the whole human race. To the former "mental phenomena do not admit of being deduced from the psychological laws of our nervous organisation ;" to the latter "a neural process or an organic state is the physical correlate of a mental state." The earlier philosopher never seemed entirely to understand the immense importance of evolution and development in mental science ; the latter is never weary of impressing upon his reader the progressive influence exercised upon the human mind by such facts as the social medium in which men live, and the laws of heredity as explaining so-called mental forms and innate ideas.

The causes of this change may be summed up in a word—the study of biology. It is biology which has brought about the recognition of the "organism," as one of the elements of psychological research. It is biology which has introduced into the text-books of Mr. Bain and Mr. Herbert Spencer such terms as "nerve" and "tissue," "organ" and "cell," "neural tremor" and "muscular reaction." It is biology again, which has suggested, if not initiated, the application of the law of development to the phenomena of the human mind. The impulse to this kind of movement came partly from Germany. Those successors of Kant who developed his philosophy on the lines of experimental research—as opposed to men like Fichte,

Schelling, and Hegel, who were the main expounders of that which is called Idealism—paved the way for a great scientific movement, of which in one way the result was Comte, in another Bain and Spencer. Mr. Lewes himself is much more the disciple of Fechner, Lotze and Wundt, than he is of John Stuart Mill.

It would be paradoxical to assert that the antagonistic school of the Idealists helped in bringing about the change in psychological science, and yet indications may be found of the force of their continuous criticism. To Stuart Mill, Kant was as a book sealed. Whether owing to imperfect opportunities for acquaintance, or to a constitutional distaste for German philosophy, Mill's system is entirely untouched by Kantian ideas. Kant's view of experience, of the *a priori* element in all perception and thought, of how the world came to be for intelligence a world at all, remained for the English philosopher either mysteries or idiosyncrasies, explicable solely by the "false metaphysical method in the chains of which all Germany was bound." By Mill the relations of sense and thought were conceived much as Hume and Locke conceived them. There was the outside thing or object which we only know as "the permanent possibility of sensation ;" there was the sense-impression, which was lively, immediate, bearing in itself the evidence of its clearness and truth ; then there came the idea, or thought, or conception abstracted from sense-impressions, the result of associations set up among the intimations of sense. Thus, thought was a sort of transformed sensation, and sense-impressions, as acted upon by laws of association (Mill's "mental chymistry")

explained all the furniture of the mind. But there were obvious difficulties in this position. What could be said of those fixed and permanent points of view, those stable relations, as another school calls them, which seem to exist in all men's minds alike, and of which Time, Space, and Cause are the most obvious and wonted examples? Could they be adequately explained as in each man's case produced during his brief span of threescore and five years by the constant and regular influx of his individual experience? Could it be in any sense true to speak of each man's mind at the outset of his experience as a *tabula rasa*? The Kantists had declared that that was impossible; that all knowledge grew indeed out of experience, but was not all due to experience; that there were some *a priori* conditions of knowledge, some fixed relations which, because thought brought them to the constitution of experience, prevented thought itself from being the mere result of experience. Biological science, in its turn, had something to say to Mill's view of knowledge. Is it true that every man starts on the career of knowledge with precisely the same advantages and disadvantages? Do organic antecedents go for nothing? Does the physiological mechanism of the human body, the result as it is of the gradual evolution of humanity, go for nothing? Is it of no consequence to a man in his intellectual or in his social life whether his fathers have eaten sour grapes or not? Can it not be true also that as a man passes on to his child his own inherited aptitudes, his temper, and his moral disposition, so also he transmits certain "forms of thought"—such as Time and Space



—which he has not made for himself any more than his son will make them for himself, but which are the crystallised results of experience throughout the whole line of human life? To speak of each man as acquiring for himself his own knowledge and experience by sensible contact with the world outside him, is to give no intelligible explanation of the difference in modes of thought between a Shakespeare and an Æschylus, a Laplace and a Democritus, still less between a Goethe and a Carib.

Thus the Idealists with their *a priori* conditions on the one side, and the Biologists with their developed organism on the other, sapped the foundations of the so-called sensationalist school. Henceforward the philosophy of experience, which erewhile had been carried on by Locke and Hume and Mill, must no longer be sensationalism and individualism, but the experimental philosophy of men like Spencer and Lewes. Historical development and the study of physiology must be recognised as the prolegomena to psychology. The close connection between psychical and physical states must be clearly avowed, and the laws of heredity given all their importance in evolving the consciousness of each individual.

It is of course the strictly scientific lines of research which have chiefly influenced Mr. Lewes. There is nothing he dislikes so much as metaphysics, unless it be dogmatic theology. And, indeed, if by Idealism is meant the vague, nebulous spiritualism of men like Victor Cousin, Maine de Biran, and Jouffroy, there is nothing which is more utterly distasteful to an acute



and scientific thinker like Mr. Lewes. "Le moi," "l'œil interne," and the rest of them, the semi-theological conception of the soul as an extraneous principle put into the body to govern it, the idea of self as a spiritual substance, whereas the body is a material substance, are crudities of thought which are invariably treated with the scorn they doubtless deserve. But Mr. Lewes was far too deep and comprehensive a thinker not to know that the followers of Kant were not metaphysicians and Idealists in this sense of the terms; and his careful exposition of Kant himself in the *History of Philosophy* served as an effective contrast to the treatment which French eclecticism received at his hands. It was not to be expected that his psychological principles would be constructed without a due regard for, or at least a careful study of, those systems which were most opposed to his general position as a philosopher.

To the student of philosophical history, to one who marks the various currents of antagonistic thought as they approach and recede and react upon each other, there are two points of considerable importance in Mr. Lewes's *Study of Psychology*, which, if his wish had been to reconcile opposing tendencies, might have been construed as attempts at a compromise, as bases for a future reconciliation between materialism and idealism in psychology. The first of these is Mr. Lewes's view of the relation between objective and subjective; the second is his peculiar conception of "the general mind," as a sort of formula for the collective action of the social medium. Extreme materialism, laying an exclusive stress on the fact of life being a function of the material

organism, treats the phenomena of mental life as results of the activity of the nervous organisation. Heat is a mode of motion : thought is a mode of neural tremor. It is not easy to express clearly Mr. Lewes's position in this matter, but it is obvious that if by such a materialism as this is meant the view that thoughts and ideas are the effects, of which nervous currents are the causes, he will not accept the doctrine. "Who that had ever looked upon the pulpy mass of brain-substance, and the nervous cords connecting it with the organs, could resist the shock of incredulity on hearing that all we knew of passion, intellect, and will, was nothing more than molecular change in this pulpy mass? Who that had ever seen a nerve-cell could be patient on being told that thought was a property of such cells, as gravitation was a property of matter?"<sup>1</sup> Nor will Mr. Lewes for a moment allow that particular functions can be with any exactness localised in particular portions of the nervous system. "I can never read without a smile<sup>2</sup> the confident statements which credit certain nerve-cells with the power of transforming impressions into sensations, and other cells with the power of transforming these sensations into ideas, which assign Volition to one centre, Sensation to another, Perception to a third, and Emotion to a fourth." And again, "Much of what passes for physiological explanation of psychological processes is simply the translation of those processes in terms of hypothetical physiology."<sup>3</sup> What, then, is the relation between modes of consciousness, like volitions, perceptions, and emotions, and objective facts like nerve-cells,

<sup>1</sup> *Study of Psychology*, p. 74.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 115.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 114.

fibres, and centres? The latter may be said to be the biological conditions of the former,<sup>1</sup> but this must not be understood to mean *pre-conditions*; they may even be said to be the cause of the subjective manifestations, only we must remember that cause and effect are not two different things, but really one phenomenon.”<sup>2</sup> Objective and subjective are, in fact, like the concave and convex sides of an arc; viewed on the one side, they are objective facts, viewed on the other, they are subjective processes.

Does this mean that the phenomena are at bottom the same, though divisible into these different aspects, so that the subjective laws we ascertain by introspection actually *are* the objective laws we gain by experiment and observation? If so, the dream of the Idealist might after all be true, that his thought *is* the Universe; while the Materialist might derive his satisfaction also from the thought that objective laws, gained by induction and experiment, exhaust the whole content of consciousness. But the question still remains, and obstinately presses for an answer,—Which comes first in genetical order? Is it Mind creating for itself an intelligible universe? Or is it the universe with its laws and development gradually evolving thought as its last and crowning product? Neither school will be satisfied with the assertion that they are both right and both wrong; that, in reality, objective and subjective are two versions of the same original, two aspects of the same phenomenon: for the natural question succeeds, What then is the underlying or original phenomenon? Is it Thought or

<sup>1</sup> *Study of Psychology*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 24.

is it Matter? the Unknowable of Mr. Spencer, or the Synthetic Consciousness of German idealism?

The last question brings us face to face with the most difficult problem which Philosophy has to solve, and which is the most effective touchstone of the opposing psychologies. "The conquest of modern speculation," as Mr. Lewes himself assures us, "is that our world arises in consciousness;" or, in other words, that all we know of objective facts is, and can be, only expressed in terms derived from our subjective feelings and ideas.<sup>1</sup> If we limited ourselves to this expression, we should be logically driven to the Idealist position, that it is only in virtue of our thought that there exists for us an intelligible world. But then, on the other side, scientific men have traced for us the gradual development of matter from its rude beginnings in protoplasm up to that human intelligence which crowns the many-chambered, slowly-built edifice. According to this view, it is intelligence which arises in, or is derived from, the world of things, not the world which arises in, or is constructed by, intelligence. It is this fundamental contradiction between two principles, each of which stands on a basis seemingly irrefragable, which the philosopher has to solve as best he may. It is the difficulty of solution that explains most of those systems which are called ontological; for instance, that strange conception of Schopenhauer, in his *Welt als Wille und Vor-*

<sup>1</sup> "Even those philosophers who believe that the substance of the mind is not in any way allied to the substance of objects, have still to admit that mental and physical phenomena are only accessible to us through Feeling: the divisions, therefore, which we establish remain from first to last divisions of feelings (p. 88)."



*stellung.* The fundamental reality with him is "Will," which begets the world with all its developing gradations of life, and begets too the intelligence or consciousness as its latest birth, whose task it is to understand or represent to itself the world. On which of the two sides of the antithesis, objective or subjective, does Mr. Lewes take his stand? Does he believe in the fullest sense that the world arises in consciousness? or that consciousness is the final development of the world? There can be no real doubt. As a man of science, as a student of physics and biology, as a distinguished exponent of the English experimental school, as an uncompromising opponent of metaphysics or metempirics in every shape, he must range himself with the materialists. And, indeed, where Mr. Lewes's concern is not so much with the refinements of psychological definition, he gives no uncertain sound. Just as Mr. Spencer, in his ontological moods, talks of an underlying substratum of the Unknowable, so Mr. Lewes, in his *Problems of Life and Mind*, refers to "a larger circle" which is objective, and which includes "the two lesser circles" which we divide into objective and subjective. It is this larger circle which is the veritably objective; which is the parent of things, the essential reality (however incapable of comprehension); and it is the successive differentiations and developments of this which produce the manifold forms of the world we know, and the diverse phenomena of that intelligence of which we are conscious. This is the true materialistic position, with whatever refinement of exposition it may be set forth, and it is sufficient to fix definitely Mr. Lewes's opinions

on the matter. Even in the *Psychology* itself, there are sentences which affirm the same thing. "The real cause" of a sensation is that which we term the "objective aspect."<sup>1</sup> "Mental phenomena are functions of the organism."<sup>2</sup> "The organism is a part of Nature, and is swept along in the great current of natural forces."<sup>3</sup> And the whole of Mr. Lewes's Objective Analysis, treating of the mode in which consciousness comes as the last term in a series of which organism and external medium are some of the integers, can bear no other interpretation than that which believes Thought itself to be an ultimate development of Matter. As against such language, therefore, as "objective and subjective being the concave and convex sides of an arc," and "our world arising in consciousness," we must set Mr. Lewes's belief in "the larger circle" which includes at once objective and subjective, a circle which is not in any way constituted by our thought, but is itself the parent and source of all life, whether conscious or unconscious.

When we turn to the other noticeable feature in Mr. Lewes's *Psychology*, doubts at first assail us, similar to those we experienced with regard to subjective and objective. Those who are familiar with Mr. Lewes's earlier works are aware of the importance which he sets upon the Psychological Medium, which amounts to the collective experience of the individual, and the Social Medium, which corresponds to the collective experience of the race. In the present work, "the General Mind" is called the product of the Social Medium, and in the influence

<sup>1</sup> Page 49.<sup>2</sup> Page 74.<sup>3</sup> Page 103.

of the General Mind, and the necessity of estimating its effects in any study of psychology, Mr. Lewes himself sees the novelty of his own conception of the science. It is by this conception that Mr. Lewes effectually divorces himself from the current materialism. "There is," he says,<sup>1</sup> "a final step to be taken for the constitution of the science. The biological conception is defective in so far as it treats only of the individual organism, and only of the organism in its relation to the External Medium. For Animal Psychology this would suffice; for Human Psychology it is manifestly insufficient. Man is a social animal—the unit of a collective life—and to isolate him from society is almost as great a limitation of the scope of Psychology as to isolate him from Nature. To seek the whole data of our science in neural processes on the one hand, and revelations of introspection on the other, is to leave inexplicable the many and profound differences which distinguish man from the animals, and these differences can be shown to depend on the operation of the Social Factor, *which transforms perceptions into conceptions, and sensations into sentiments.*"

It is, then, the General Mind, the product of the Social Medium, which has to do with the transformation of perceptions into conceptions. Apart from the context in which they are found, some of Mr. Lewes's expressions might almost seem to have emanated from the school of Idealism. What is this General Mind? It is "the collective consciousness," "*the human mind, not a mind*;" it is an "ideal mind," it is that in virtue of which we say that "Thought belongs essentially to

<sup>1</sup> Page 78.

Humanity." It is not simply "an addition," it is "a factor, which permeates the whole composition of the (individual) mind."<sup>1</sup> "The (psychological) data which have been studied apart must be reconstructed by a synthesis before we reach an explanation."<sup>2</sup> Have we here the Synthetic Consciousness of which the school of Hegelians make such capital? Are we to conceive of this general mind as the activity of impersonal thought, bringing conceptions and forms and categories to the inert mass of feeling—"the manifold," as Kant has it—rendering experience into a human, intelligible experience, constituting (in the full sense of the term) the world in which we live as an intelligible world, a world which we can understand and make our own? Or is it a generalised expression for the experience of mankind—"the residual store of experiences common to all" developed by the gradual processes of cosmic evolution? Is it a factor, or a product? The difficulty of grasping Mr. Lewes's conception lies in the fact that it is both factor and product. "This mighty impersonality is at once the product and the factor of social evolution."<sup>3</sup> Just as in the infancy of nations man forms the state, while in their maturity the state forms the man, so it is with the collective experience of the race fashioning the experience of the individual; and the significant warning is added that we must not accept it a *res completa*, as a metaphysical abstraction, "it is a World-process, not a Soul of the World." However much, then, at first sight the General Mind might seem to be a conception Idealistic in its

<sup>1</sup> Pages 159-161.<sup>2</sup> Page 76.<sup>3</sup> Page 80.



import, it is clear that Mr. Lewes did not mean it to appear in this light. To him it was an extension of the Comtist doctrine of an impersonal Humanity. It may, indeed, serve in the future as a possible ground for reconciliation between Idealist and Materialist; possibly, Mr. Lewes himself may have wished it to represent a *rapprochement* between the school of neural tremors and the school of synthetic consciousness; but, as it stands, it is clearly meant to be of significance only to him who accepts the doctrine of Evolution as fully applicable to the highest forms of human intelligence.

The doctrine itself, if we examine its bearings, brings us to one of the capital points of divergence between Idealism and Materialism. The battle of the psychologies rages fiercest round the so-called Forms of Mind. Kant's analysis of experience seemed to reveal certain archetypal forms of intelligence, which were presupposed in all possible human knowledge, which were given *to* experience, and not abstracted *from* experience. To say as much as this seemed to the opposing school a revival of the doctrine of Innate Ideas, clothed in a clever but superficial disguise. It involved the impossibility of explaining knowledge without the assumption of certain innate activities of thought, which, if true, would be fatal not only to such sensationalism as that of Hume and Mill, but also to any material evolution of human intelligence whether professed by a Darwin or a Herbert Spencer. What, then, was the answer of the Evolutionists? Simply that the so-called mental forms were themselves the product of evolution. That which could explain the gradual birth of Humanity out of

Ascidians, could also explain the genesis of certain mental capacities and aptitudes out of the accumulated experiences of generations of men. Thus the Kantian forms might, indeed, be *a priori* to any given individual, but they were none the less *a posteriori* to the race. Or, as Mr. Lewes might perhaps put it, Humanity begets the Social Medium, the Social Medium begets the General Mind, and the General Mind involves certain inherited capacities of thought.

Here, then, in one paramount instance, we have the bitter root of difference. To the Idealist experience is only intelligible on the presupposition of a synthetic consciousness with certain forms of activity. To the Materialist the whole result is explicable by a progressive, sensible contact with things, evolution explaining even the mental forms. Experience is one thing to the Idealist, another to the Materialist. Hence the criticism of Mr. Lewes on Kant is that he confused a question of *Psychogenesis*, or the growth of intelligence, with a question of *Psychostatics* (if the expression may be allowed), that is, an analysis of the *developed* human mind. "He starts with the developed products, and never pauses to investigate their production, physiological or psychological."<sup>1</sup> The Idealist, however, refuses to acknowledge his mistake. It is to no purpose to say that experience can evolve intelligence, until we clearly see what this implies. In the first place, it implies that a man can inherit from his ancestors not only constitutional peculiarities of disposition and temper—which is tolerably certain—but also modes of

<sup>1</sup> Page 171.

thinking, fixed forms of knowledge, which is by no means so clear or so well attested. But even granting this, there are yet further difficulties. What is meant by the human intelligence acquiring certain forms of thought from experience, unless the forms of thought were already implicit in experience? If men have the forms or aptitudes already in their minds, they can apply them to their successive experiences; but how can experience itself, coming in one shape to one man and in another to another, in a mass of sensations, of which one is gone before another comes, generate out of itself the forms *which are to make it an intelligible experience*? No Science, as Mr. Lewes says, can be constructed out of data furnished by observation of the phenomena as they pass; and in the same way, says the Idealist, no intelligible experience can be constructed out of data furnished by sensations as they pass. To become experience, sensations must be lifted out of the state of flux and transitoriness, which is their normal condition, and made fixed and permanent by a mental activity, manifesting itself in relations and forms. Only by becoming fixed can sensations become known; only by becoming subject to mental relations can sensations become fixed; only, therefore, by a pre-supposed mental activity can sense-experience become an intelligible Experience.

The question of Psychogenesis, as opposed to Psychostatics, of the dynamical conditions of mind as opposed to the statical conditions, is one which threatens to become the *vexata quæstio* of future Psychology. It is one which is not to be answered by phrases or abstractions,

whether the abstraction be Synthetic Consciousness or a General Mind, but only by a rigorous analysis of mental states, conducted, as Mr. Lewes says, both by Observation and Introspection, studied as well in the laboratory of a man's own intelligence as in the wider teachings of Social and Historical Evolution. It is only indicated here, not with any view to disparage one answer in comparison with the other, but merely to bring into clearer light the future problems of the Psychologist so far as they are affected by Mr. Lewes's work. In it we have discovered two new and striking conceptions, both of which have, at first sight, a tendency to reduce the interval which lies between "the step-by-step progression of Science" and "the large and incoherent leaps of Metaphysics." To say that Objective and Subjective are "two versions of the same original," that the antithesis between Physis and *Æsthesis* is a "logical artifice, not a psychical reality," seems at first sight to be an admission that both subject and object are only to be understood in relation to each other, as alike constituted by the synthetic and differentiating activity of Thought. To say that the General Mind "transforms perceptions into conceptions," that Psychology has to explain "the normal reactions of an ideal mind," reads almost like a sentence of Kant in the pages of *The Physical Basis of Mind*. In each case the approximations,—if approximations they may be called,—serve possibly to disguise the interval, but in reality leave it as profoundly marked as before. As before, the old problem arises, Is Mind to be explained from the side of Matter, or Matter to be explained from the



side of Mind? On the one side we have the assured and incontrovertible progress of Science, passing over the chasm between objective neural tremors and subjective conscious processes, just as it passes over the logical interval between Heat and Motion. On the other, we may paraphrase the words of Mr. Lewes:—"Although there is an intelligible expression of Matter and Motion in terms of *Thought*, there is no such intelligible expression of *Thought* in terms of Matter and Motion."

If, leaving aside these subtleties of metaphysical discussion, we confine ourselves to broad general issues, and ask to which side will tend the future speculations of English Psychology, the answer is hardly doubtful. For many reasons it seems likely that the ultimate victory in England will rest with the side which lays its stress on Science and Experience. It is ordinarily supposed, indeed, that the so-called Spiritualistic hypothesis has a strong ally in the religious feelings of the community; but even were such the case, the alliance itself is not one which is specially valuable. On the other side are ranged far stronger forces,—the inherited aptitudes of the English temper in philosophy; the possession of such progenitors as Hume, and Locke and Hobbes; the constitutional English dislike of subtlety, and its preference for that which affords solid and tangible results. And if this be so, it becomes a matter of some importance to adapt to the newer standpoint some of those practical studies and disciplines which have hitherto been modelled on the older lines. There is little doubt, for instance, that the science of

Education has been hitherto based on something like the Platonic idea of the soul as a separate and special substance in authority over the body. And the science of Ethics, too, has undoubtedly some of the old Spiritualistic Adam about it, with its insistence on ideal duty and authoritative conscience and categorical imperatives. Conceptions such as these must either disappear, or be vitally transformed in the crucible of experimental Ethics.

With regard to Education, the probable difference will be that whereas the traditional teaching begins with the culture of the imagination, and ends with the logical appreciation of facts, the procedure will in future have to be reversed. When Professor Huxley said, holding in his hands a lump of chalk, that he would rather know all about the chalk than have by heart the histories and literature of Greece and Rome, the expression was significant of the educational future. In one sense of the words, it was little better than a paradox,—almost a dangerous one; in another it was a profound truth, if it meant that the study of Physics trains the mind in methods of sounder and more practical value than the customary tincture of Classics. If Truth be better than Culture, then the studies which produce the habits of logical caution, of weighing evidence and analysing complex facts, are better for man than those which act powerfully on the perceptive, imaginative faculties, and leave the logical alone. Apart from sentimental objections, educational methods in the future seem likely to be better than those of the past, which undoubtedly were at times crudely empirical and wildly

spiritualistic. We may at the same time, if we will, deplore certain elements of value and delight which were bound up with the older discipline. But the importance is obvious of having a rational and verifiable basis for Education, rather than one which is unverifiable.

The case stands somewhat differently with Ethics. It is a question if Ethics can survive at all as an independent Science, if the psychological assumptions of the materialists be realised. For if Conscience be, as Dr. Maudsley assures us, only a function of the physical organisation, it is more than ever difficult to see whence will be derived the power of ethical sanctions. Either the doctrine itself must be held as an esoteric one, and then we must frankly avow the necessity of two sorts of Ethics, one for the initiated and one for the vulgar, or else the ordinary sanctions must be reinstated by the stress laid on the subjective aspects of objective organic facts. Here again, however, compensating advantages are to be found. It is much to get rid of superstition; it is much to be quit of the notions of Hell and Devil; possibly it is of still greater ethical value to know that sin is never remediable, that Nature never forgives. In all these matters to look for all the advantages on the one side and all the drawbacks on the other is unreasonable, and absurdly unhistorical. Progress is not continuous and rectilinear development; it is a tide made up of several divergent currents, a vast system of action and reaction, systole and diastole. And the end is not yet.

## VI.

### THE NEW ETHICS.

THERE are some intellectual controversies which appear interminable and unappeasable. All down the history of Philosophy has run one main dualism of creed, principle, system, called by many names in different periods, but at bottom and intrinsically the same. Now it is the conflict between the Ionic and the Italic schools of Greek Philosophy : now it is the battle of Socrates and the Sophists : in mediæval times it takes the form of Nominalism *versus* Conceptualism : in a modern age the opposing forces are called Idealism and Empiricism, Science and Metaphysics, Evolution and Teleology. But “tho’ many the names the shape is one ;” and the battle-ground is always bloodless, for the simple reason that, like the memorable fight between cat and fish, neither side ever really can get at its enemy. When the smoke rolls away and the victor is just beginning to erect his trophy, there before his eyes are the old combatants, with a new panoply perhaps, but with the same indomitable and irreducible members. The *causa belli* is always the conflicting claims of Sense and Thought ; but as the one side includes in Sense what the other side means by Thought, while the process is reversed by the antagonist, the conflict though obstinate is hardly conclusive.



In Moral Philosophy, though the issues are perhaps more important, the history is the same. As Aristippus confronts Antisthenes, as Zeno opposes Epicurus, so does Butler measure swords with Hobbes, and Spencer tries a fall with Kant. Here, again, we may lay our finger on the contested point. The question is briefly this: Should man, as a subject of Ethical Science, be considered as he has become, or as he ought to be? As he has become;—well, then, you are a Cyrenaic, an Hedonist, an Utilitarian, an Evolutionist. As he ought to be;—then you are a Stoic, an Intuitionist, an advocate of an *a priori* system, a Teleologist. For the final and most modern form of the ethical dispute has come to this: Is man, morally considered, to be viewed as the last product of an animal series, slowly developing through centuries of time? Or is he to be looked on as immeasurably distinguished, by his loves and faiths, from the whole animal world, as a being *sui generis*, who in his morality transcends the limits of experience and a phenomenal world? On the one side is Kant, on the other, Herbert Spencer: here is the *Metaphysic of Ethics*, and there the *Data of Ethics*. The object of this Essay is to elucidate some aspects of this modern form of the ethical controversy.

In what sense can the actions of human beings, so far as they are moral or immoral, become the subject of Science? It is in reality not very easy to say; and the difficulty is seen in the various modes in which philosophers have estimated the words "Right" and "Wrong" as applicable to actions. Shall we judge by the "motive" under which an action is done, or by the

“intention” (which by a very fine-drawn distinction Mr. Mill severs from the motive), or by the plain and obvious results of actions, whether immediate or remote? Shall we make our Ethics a deductive science, deduced from the data of Psychology, or an inductive science—a catalogue of the tendencies of acts, as affirmed by experience? Or shall we begin wholly *a priori*, by attempting to study man, not as we see him in his ordinary sphere of daily success and failure, but as a spiritual “Ego,” man in his highest essence, a thinking, rational soul? Where do we find so many divergences and contradictions as in the opinions of moral philosophers? From whence it comes that while some of the positive thinkers of a modern age express their impatience by the verdict that Ethics is an unprogressive science, others would fain begin the whole study afresh, by linking Ethics on to that grand and imposing series of experimental sciences, which began long ago in Greece and Egypt in Mathematics, and is ending to-day in the so-called Sociology, or Social Physics, of Comte, Mill, and Spencer. If knowledge is to be scientific, it must be gained by an identical method of Observation and Experience. The method may, of course, avail itself of fresh devices in accordance with the nature of the phenomena it is studying, but at bottom the scientific procedure is one. It is thus that mathematical truths have been gained; it is thus that Astronomy and Physics and Chemistry and Biology have been constituted as sciences, with a body of facts which can no more be disbelieved than the simple proposition that two lines can not enclose a space. But are the phenomena of Human

Society and History capable of a similar treatment? Yes, is the answer of the Scientist, if we use Comparative methods, and Historical methods, and distinguish between Social Statics and Social Dynamics, and give up once for all the absurd and archaic doctrine of Freedom of the Will. We shall then get a Science of Sociology, not quite in the same sense, indeed, as we get a Science of Astronomy, but with the possibly trifling difference that in the former case we arrive at laws embodying tendencies, while in the latter we have got tolerably unqualified and incontrovertible facts. The laws of Social Science are not exact, here, now, and everywhere, but true under certain limitations of time and place and antecedent conditions. We cannot say as an absolute truth that Human Society advances in proportion to the growth of intellectual cultivation, any more than we can say that men always prefer a greater gain to a less, but we can say that this is true *ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ* (as Aristotle would say), that this is the great *tendency*, the law which is true in a vast majority of cases.

And how can we make Ethics, too, a science in this positive, experimental way? The answer is clear. We have to study in the light of experience the phenomena of human action, in order to see why some acts have come to be called good and virtuous, and others bad and vicious. The acts of a man—what are they? Well, first the acts of an animal; then the acts of a conscious animal; finally the acts of an animal who is incurably social. An animal succeeds, if his acts succeed in preserving his own life: a conscious animal and

a social animal include their own offspring and their own species in their desire for preservation. So we have at the bottom of the scale self-preserving acts, selfish acts, then care for offspring, then desire for the welfare of humanity, both of the latter being unselfish or altruistic acts. But where do the words "good" and "bad" come in, as relative to these acts? Clearly, on any scheme of Evolution, good means successful, bad means pernicious and destructive. Therefore, if a man succeeds in preserving his own life, he does a good act; if he succeeds in preserving the life of his family, he does a good act; if he succeeds in securing the welfare of his species, he does a good act. Thus Ethics becomes the science of Conduct in the largest sense of the word. The virtuous man, the ethically good man, whom Ethical Science delights to honour, is he who is primarily selfish, and secondarily unselfish, who begins by Egoism and mixes it in rational proportions with Altruism.

But has all this got anything to do with Morality as we have been accustomed to understand the term? At first sight we should say, certainly not. It used to be considered one of the discoveries of modern ethics, as compared with ancient, that it realised and gave due importance to the notion of duty. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle spoke of "the good" as the object of human activity and the end of human endeavour; but it was left to Butler and Cudworth and Kant to set forth the ethical "duty" of man. A deeper study of psychology had had, it was believed, this result: that such ideas as "conscience" and "moral obligation" were held



to be inseparable from ethical action. Man, as an animal, came under the cognisance of physiology and biology; man, as conscious, fell under the domain of psychology; but man, as a moral being, was to be recognised as one who, in the various fields of his activity, felt himself under the rule of a "must," an "ought," an "obligation," a "categorical imperative." There was the lower self of passion, emotion, and appetite; but this sphere, taken by itself, was neither moral nor immoral, but simply non-moral. Moral determination only came in when the higher self of will and conscience and reason were understood to be dictating to the unwilling and rebellious servitors below them. From this point of view a clear line was drawn between Ethical Science and other sciences. Psychology, Anthropology, Biology deal with the systematisation of facts: so much experimental study of data: so much inductive attainment of general laws: so much deduction and verification. But Ethics takes the form of the enunciation of a law. The central fact in Ethics is moral obligation, which may be differently stated as the sense of duty, or the necessity of self-regulation in conduct. Moral Science, taking for its field of study the courses of human action, is confronted by this fact: that in man, there is not only effort, desire, impulse, passion, but also the feeling, however explained, that a necessity is laid upon him to do the conduct which he deems right, whatever interpretation of the word "right" he may assume to be true: that if he does not do it he will suffer in some way, if not externally, at all events internally, by the inner feeling of remorse, and that thus

he is what we term a responsible creature, responsible for the right direction of his powers and activities, and, so far as is implied in this description, possessed of self-regulation and self-control. And it is no uncommon method for the historian of Philosophy to take this fact as giving at once a classification of moral schemes. We may at once divide moral systems into those which, like Mysticism, Pantheism, Scepticism, and Materialism, give no explanation of moral obligation, and those which do make some attempted explanation—whether unsatisfactory (as Utilitarianism, or systems of moral sentiments and feelings), or satisfactory (as Rationalistic Ethics).

With such opinions as these, it is clear that we are moving in quite a different world from that to which scientific Ethics transports us. What does science know of a distinction in sciences, like that we attempted to sketch above, between Ethics and Biology? What does science know or care about a feeling or idea of moral obligation? An idea, it would say, given wholly *a priori*, deduced from some romantically conceived psychology of transcendental man. What has science to do with the necessity of self-control in action, believing, as it does, that man is not free, but bound in the chains of Cause and Effect, Antecedent and Consequent? The whole description of man as a moral being involves the implicit reference to freedom of the Will. A man controls himself because he is free, is responsible because free, feels, above all, the agonies of remorse, because he knows he could have acted differently if he had exerted his free volition. But man is only a conscious and social

animal, perhaps only an automaton, a thing compacted of atoms and molecules. What other duty has he to recognise but the promptings of that Nature, which, by its drastic methods of selection and survival of the fittest, has led him up from the Ascidian to the Anthropoid Ape, and from Ape to Man? Right action is of course that conduct which is most in accord with the developing tendencies of Progress as exhibited in History. Man succeeded because he began by being selfish and then became social and unselfish, and moral action is only, in a newer sense, that living conformably to Nature—τὸ τῇ φύσει ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν—of which Stoicism dreamed so many centuries ago. To be successful in life is only to listen aright to the teaching of evolutionary progress: and to be moral is only another name for being successful in self-perpetuation.

On the question of "Duty" at all events, Mr. Herbert Spencer<sup>1</sup> gives no uncertain sound. "This remark implies the tacit conclusion which will be to most very startling, that the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory and will diminish as fast as moralisation increases. Startling though it is, this conclusion may be satisfactorily defended. Evidently, with complete adaptation to the social state, that element in the moral consciousness which is expressed by the word Obligation will disappear. The higher actions required for the harmonious carrying on of life will be as much matters of course as are those lower actions which the simple desires prompt. In their proper times and places and proportions, the moral sentiments will guide

<sup>1</sup> *Data of Ethics*, p. 127.

men just as spontaneously and adequately as do the sensations." Of course it must be so, for morality does not mean with Mr. Herbert Spencer something which is unnatural and therefore obligatory, but obligatory (or rather in the future pleasant) because entirely natural. We are born animals, and in this stage moral action for us is wholly self-regarding ; we become social, and then moral action has to engraft a certain flower of altruism on the stem of selfishness. Here we have men, with their acts and their conduct, and there behind them is the great impersonal Nature, which gives its reward to those acts which abide and remain and tend to perpetuate themselves, and curses the others with extinction. A moral act to me is that which nature rewards with perpetuity, and an immoral act is that which she punishes by extinction. But what, in this attitude of patient waiting on impersonal nature, becomes of Wordsworth's dream of Duty as the "stern daughter of the voice of God," or Kant's "great and sublime name" the Moral Law, which he could only compare for majesty to the starry heavens above him ?

The doctrine of Evolution has another effect on modern views of Ethics, which is quite as important as that we have been attempting to trace. It is well known that the attitude of science towards a Teleological interpretation of things is one of uncompromising hostility. Now, just as old-fashioned Ethics involves in reality the assumption that Man's Will is free, so too is it full of the idea of a final cause of things, of adaptation towards a given end, of some far-off divine event. How are we to judge of man's nature as ex-



hibiting tendencies and aptitudes towards Right and Morality, except on the assumption of some given end of Perfection, towards which the man is struggling, in view of which he is for ever bringing under, and keeping in subjection, his lower animal instincts? This is not true of Kant's ethical system, with his specious antithesis between Heteronomy of the Will and Autonomy; at least it is not ostensibly true; though it may be doubted whether his noumenal Ego, which is the real seat and home of Morality, is not an Ideal, which serves the purposes of Teleological adaptation. At all events, it is true of commonplace, old-fashioned, ordinary Ethics, which is always repeating its lessons of the Moral Exemplar, which mankind have to struggle to follow, and its recommendation to be perfect as a Father in Heaven is perfect. And it is exactly this constant looking away from the data to some imagined ends which they are designed to subserve, which has provoked the antagonism of scientific thought from Bacon downwards. "*Ex analogia hominis potius quam universi*" are all these ends, these ideals, these perfections. Nay more, Science proposes its own shibboleth for the catch-words of Teleology. You ask why a particular emotion exists, why such and such moral impulses have their force and potency, and you are bidden to look at their past history. Man's moral nature is a growth, just as much as his hand, or his eye, or his upright posture. What is the meaning of Conscience? Well, it is a survival, a deposit or accretion of sentiment round the original animal impulse of self-preservation. You can see its upward, or rather its onward, path, from the grasping and grubbing

of the ape for himself to the sublime self-sacrifice of the hero. The final cause of Conscience? Nay, the history of Conscience. Not Teleology, but Evolution.

How strangely does the whirligig of Time bring round its revenges! In the earlier pages of Plato's *Republic* there is a controversy depicted between Socrates and the Sophist Thrasymachus on the meaning of the word "Justice," a sort of introduction or prologue, full of arguments, which are usually deemed captious, ironical, inconclusive. The coarse and loud-voiced Thrasymachus, with his bluster about the natural history of Justice and the ultimately selfish character of all virtue, is overthrown by the quiet, subtle master of word-fence, Socrates, with considerations drawn from such words as *ἔργον* and *τέλος*, man's work and man's aim. It is no good asking, Socrates seems to say, how much of a beast man was at first; you should rather look at the perfected nature of man, at the ends he was designed to subserve, at the ideal he is capable of attaining. But now the positions are reversed. It is the unhappy Teleologist who is forced to bluster, to cover his want of argument underneath a cloud of rhetoric. It is the quiet, subtle Scientist, with the triumphant energy of his victorious Analysis, who is catching the heels of the unwary by his dogmas of Evolution and the genesis of the Moral Consciousness.

Yet even so there is one consideration which it is perhaps not unimportant to insist on. Let us grant all the natural history of man's moral nature; let us allow him his unsavoury parentage, with the grace of defeated, though possibly unconvinced, antagonists. Does all this,

however, impair the validity of our moral nature, here and now? I was an anthropoid ape once, a mollusc, an ascidian, a bit of protoplasm; but whether by chance or providence, I am not now. When I was an ape, I thought as an ape, I acted as an ape, I lived as an ape; but when I became a man, I put away apish things. Man's moral nature is what it is, not what it was: it lives for and is judged by present opportunities and possibilities: it must not for ever have its low origin cast in its teeth. Why should the rudimentary beginnings for ever throw their shadow on the completed structure?

The consideration is of equal weight in Psychology. It is the great discovery of Mr. Spencer and Mr. Lewes that all human knowledge is really *a posteriori*,—*a posteriori* to the race, though not to the individual. Kant's great mistake is to have taken the mind as it is, not to have traced its growth, to have studied the Statics (so to speak) of Mind, and not the Dynamics. Hence has arisen all this talk of *a priori* Forms and Capacities and Categories. It is "Psychogeny" with which alone Philosophy should be interested. But if we are to have a Philosophy of the Mind at all, must we not take the Mind as it is? What is the precise object of studying the Mind, when it was not a Mind at all, but an organic secretion? Is the object to disprove the existence of innate capacities? But we have only to call them organic aptitudes due to Heredity, and Science comes over to our side. Is the object to prove that the Human Mind was, as Locke asserted, only a blank piece of paper? But then there is nothing left to observe;

and Psychology has no object of study. I say nothing of that pregnant doubt which every one who has ever so cursorily dipped into Metaphysics must feel—the irrepressible question as to how Experience can itself evolve the conditions under which Experience is possible, how knowledge can itself create its own necessary prerequisites. And if this be so, we may even console ourselves,—Darwin and Spencer and Häckel notwithstanding,—that the consciousness which makes us human first, and moral afterwards, knows nothing of Time or Development or Evolution.

There is, however, a lower deep in the Ethics of Science. In Mr. Spencer's *Data of Ethics*, we do not, after all, touch the crass Ethics of Atomistic Materialism. He does not seem to wish us to think that man is but a conscious mass of molecules. He hardly, perhaps, assents to the doctrine that Morality is a matter of organisation; that some men are moral, because the molecules which form them meet in such-and-such chance combinations, and not in others; that if the position of the molecules be changed a moral man becomes immoral. To see this aspect of Ethics let us turn to a by no means violent advocate of the doctrine, Dr. Maudsley.

“One thing is certain, that Moral Philosophy cannot penetrate the hidden springs of feeling and impulse; they lie deeper than it can reach, for they lie in the physical constitution of the individual, and going still farther back, perhaps, in his organic antecedents; assuredly of some criminals, as of some insane persons, it may truly be said that they are born and not made;



they go criminal, as the insane go mad, because they cannot help it ; a stronger power than they can counteract has given the bias of their being.”<sup>1</sup> Or again—“Many persons, who readily admit in general terms the dependence of mental function on cerebral structure, are inclined, when brought to this particular test, to make an exception in favour of the moral feeling or conscience.—The moral feeling may be impaired or destroyed by direct injury of the brain, by the disorganising action of disease, and by the chemical action of certain substances, which are poisons to the nervous system. When we look sincerely at the facts we cannot help perceiving that it is just as closely dependent upon organisation as the meanest function of the mind.”<sup>2</sup>

But all this is only a nightmare. To call a man a parcel of matter is one of the most curious of the perversions of the reasoning consciousness. For the student of Berkeley, at all events, the belief that mind can be evolved out of matter is a gigantic *petitio principii*,—a most portentous and illogical *hysteron proteron*.

Be that as it may, the scientific picture of man as a moral being is certainly not comforting, as is clear from a comparison of it with other, more familiar pictures. Roughly speaking, there are three views of man's moral nature, which are given respectively by Theology, Metaphysics, and Science, and which fall (so Comte at all events would tell us) into their proper order according to the “*loi des trois états*.” It is not perhaps necessary to refer at any length to the ordinary theological picture,

<sup>1</sup> *Body and Mind*, Lecture “On Conscience.”

<sup>2</sup> *Fortnightly Review*, 1879.

especially as it is pieced together out of beliefs, which, philosophically speaking, are somewhat incongruous. There are certain veins of optimistic thought—especially in the belief, so counter to human experience, that godliness has the promise of this life as well as that which is to come. But the prevailing tone is one of pessimism, the idea of the unsatisfactoriness of life, the misery of the world, the purgatory of the fleshly existence. There is the antique fancy of an age of primeval blessedness; there is the oriental view of the agency of a spirit of darkness; there is the Hebraic notion of a jealous God, who, giving men souls, brings them also under a primeval curse; dooms them to sin, and yet offers them salvation, if they believe in the virtue of sacrificial blood; and there is the Christian notion of a Providence, all-wise, all-powerful, all-benevolent, who knows everything that men will do, and yet holds them responsible; who has power over everything, and yet makes good arise only by contrast to evil; who wishes that all men should be saved, and yet makes a certain creed the condition of salvation. In such a scheme as this, man, as a moral being, is a strange creature. He has free will, and yet is foredoomed one way or another; he has good impulses, and yet his heart is desperately wicked: he must live in the world he knows, and yet live for another world which he does not know; he sins in time and is punished in eternity. Yet, because man is always greater than his creeds the theologians are able to point to heroes and to saints, with an indefinable air of holiness around them, who have lived “sweet lives

of purest chastity," and have enriched the possibilities of existence by the very fact that they have breathed our common air. Strangely enough, the notion that good is made better by contact with evil, however logically incomprehensible, is practically realised by the fascination which those men exert over their fellows who are known to have had a life-long struggle with themselves. And even the spirit of detachment and ethereality, which the strong conviction of living for another world is able to impart, adds a lustre to human virtue, even though it may sometimes dim its practical usefulness.

The metaphysical view of man gives at least a fine and consistent picture of what is meant by morality, though, of course, it is open to the criticism that its consistency is due to its *a priori* origin and its grandeur to its imaginative idealism. The spirit of man is in this view something distinct and separate from the corporeal nature, drawn possibly from some Higher Spirit of the Universe or Divine Self-Consciousness. It is a pure, clear essence, which is immortal, by whatever name known, whether Soul, or Reason, or Noumenal Self. This it is which designs the ends for which man lives, which imposes laws, which issues its authoritative and incontrovertible commands. Because it can command, it is powerful; because it is the fountain of law, it is free; because it is free, it is responsible. But there is between it and animal desire a perpetual conflict, and out of the conflict there arises Morality. Without the conflict there is no Morality, a moral act being essentially one which is done in the teeth of animal re-

sistance. On the one hand, there is the man as our senses give him to us, with emotion, desire, and short-sighted passion; on the other hand, there is the man as our Thought gives him to us, the crowned King of the World, pure Reason, pure Soul, pure Idea. And all the struggles and the heartburnings arise from the daily antithesis of Reason and Impulse, the immoral act due to the one, and the moral to the other. When a man is led by the Spirit, which moves in him and all Intelligences, then he is following the ends of his life; and when he divorces himself from that ideal humanity, and in the isolation of his selfish nature pursues the immediate objects of desire, then does he sacrifice manhood to something lower in the scale of life, and cut himself off from the Divine order and framework of things.<sup>1</sup>

But the scientific moral man will not dream thus. He was an ape, he is a man, he will be dust. He raised himself by well-calculated selfishness; he maintains himself by an equally well-calculated altruism. What is to guide him in his present state? That which has all along guided him,—the preference of pleasure to pain. His reason is granted him to enable him to be more successfully happy, and to help others to secure their happiness, so long as they do not interfere with his own. He is first and foremost an animal, then he is an animal blessed (or cursed, according to the pessimists) with consciousness; lastly, he is a social animal. His consciousness raises him from the *μονόχρονος ἡδονή*, the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Kant's *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, Werke vi. 95.



short-lived satisfactions of the animal, his sociality enables him to combine devotion to his kind with devotion to himself, to solve somehow the contradiction between altruism and egoism. Personal immortality he does not of course possess: his body is resolved into the elements whence it has been slowly evolved. Nor yet is his spirit absorbed into some vast impersonal spirit; that is a metaphysical delusion; there is no such opposition between body and spirit as older philosophy supposed. But if he lives on at all, it is in the life of human beings who come after him, and that only in virtue of certain social cosmopolitan acts by which he has enriched humanity at large. And if we ask what a right act or a moral act means in contrast with a wrong and immoral act, the answer is clear. A right act in the last resort must be defined as one which is in accordance with that systematic action by which man, as he is now, was evolved. That is to say, a right act is a natural act, guided by the reason which grasps at chances of pleasure and success, self-perpetuation and longevity. A right act is first and foremost a natural act, one done in obedience to the promptings of nature: only nature in the largest sense, the nature of man as a conscious, selfish, social animal. If, too, we may trust Mr. Herbert Spencer, who, like most evolutionists, is and must be an optimist, in the course of time the right act becomes easier and easier. "Not he who believes that adaptation will increase is absurd, but he who doubts that it will increase is absurd," he says with the solemnity of a man who is quoting some text of Scripture. "Pleasure will eventually accompany every mode of action de-

manded by social conditions.”<sup>1</sup> And then the Millennium, when the evolved man is as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove, a marvellous compound of selfishness and unselfishness, whose animality is cunningly blended with his benevolent sociality.

There are indeed difficulties in the ready acceptance of such a view. It is not easy to accustom one's-self to regard (as from this aspect we must) a married life as better than an unmarried one, a long life as more moral than a shorter one. It is not easy to picture the mental and social lives of men as the mere development of the physical life, when they appear to be so clearly contradictory of it, and so obviously to curtail, circumscribe, and overpower the privileges of animality. Nor again is it at once apparent how Mr. Herbert Spencer can possibly allow that Absolute Ethics precede Relative Ethics, that the ideal truths come first, except on the supposition, which is fatal to the scientific evolutionist, that the end is really implicit in the process; that the evolution requires, so to speak, a prior involution; and that, therefore, there is a *hysteron proteron*, as in Scientific Psychology, so in Scientific Ethics.<sup>2</sup> But it is undeniable that in some senses the newer version of morality speaks smooth things to our ears, things easy to be understood

<sup>1</sup> *Data of Ethics*, pp. 185, 186.

<sup>2</sup> The point is rather an important one, and it will be better to quote some sentences. “Thus, ascertainment of the actual truths has been made possible only by pre-ascertainment of certain ideal truths.” But how, according to the Scientific Psychology, can the human mind know the ideal before the actual? “Empirical Ethics can evolve into Rational Ethics only by first formulating the laws of right action apart from the obscuring effects of special conditions.” That is to say, that Empirical Ethics clearly presuppose Rational Ethics; that the evolution requires a prior idea, *δυνάμει* at all events, if not *ἐνεργεία*. And again, where Herbert Spencer becomes very

by our common clay. Let us then, in clear recognition that a long life means not only a happy one but a moral one, pull down our private barns and build larger, social, co-operative ones; and let us say to the Tribal Soul that it has many goods laid up for many years, that it may eat, drink, and be both selfishly and altruistically merry,—unless, indeed, we have not yet banished the haunting suspicion that somewhere, or somehow, or somewhen, either from nature or fate or fortune or God, there may be borne in upon us the intolerable irony of that voice—"Thou Fool!"

nearly a teleologist: "The ideal man has to be defined in terms of those objective requirements which must be met before conduct can be right." What else are these objective requirements but *τέλη*, ends in relation to which we judge conduct to be either good or bad? (*Data of Ethics*, pp. 274, 271, 279.)

## VII.

### “BACK TO KANT.”

IN Germany, we are told, the philosophic cry is, “Back to Kant.” Even outside the classic home of metaphysics, the tendency implied in such an avowal is at work. More and more as the echoes of metaphysical controversy reach the “practical” ears of English thinkers, there grows an uneasy feeling that in the evolution of thought Kant has to be reckoned with by a modern age, just as much as Aristotle had to be reckoned with by an ancient. In many cases, it is true, the ears of English scientists are sealed by the wax of “common sense,” which is considered so potent an anæsthetic, when the siren-songs of metaphysics are in the air. But Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. George Lewes, at all events, seem to be conscious that they must set themselves right with Kant, just as Bacon felt towards that elder logician “qui philosophiam corruperat dialecticâ suâ.” And in Germany there is actually a school of Neo-Kantians. Otto Liebmann, for instance, with his assertion, “Es muss auf Kant zurückgegangen werden,”<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Hermann Cohen, with his careful treatise, *Kant's Theorie der Erfahrung*.<sup>2</sup> The author of the *History of Materialism* has himself devoted an elaborate chapter to

<sup>1</sup> *Kant und die Epigonen*, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> Berlin, 1871.



the elucidation of Kant's position towards the theoretic materialists.<sup>1</sup>

For such a resurrection of Kantian influence there are many reasons to be assigned. There are some which connect themselves with the general laws which appear to dominate the historic development of philosophic systems. For the history of philosophy is full of reactions; and the student may quite reasonably lay down a general rule that Idealism will be followed by Realism, and Realism by Idealism. When Kant appeared, Materialism seemed crushed, but when Kant had been sublimated into Fichte and Schelling and Hegel, Materialism revived; then men began to bethink themselves of those watchwords which had proved so potent before, and to rally round the familiar standard, just as too impetuous soldiers are forced to re-seek the shelter of their own camp. But in reality the phenomenon is not wholly explained by merely historic considerations like these. There are some thinkers to whom we do dishonour by arbitrarily classing them with one or the other of the two philosophic armies. Was Aristotle a Realist or an Idealist? He was neither, or he was both. Was Kant an Empiricist or a Metaphysician? Sometimes the one, sometimes the other, but in reality greater than either. We can undoubtedly pick out passages which may be read in the one sense or in the other; there are some of his dogmas and opinions with regard to which we can unhesitatingly say that they are valueless, or even perhaps meaningless. It still remains

<sup>1</sup> Cf. too the authorities cited in Max Müller's *Kant*, vol. i. Pref. xv, xxiii, xliii.

true that Kant, with a select company of thinkers of all ages, with Plato, and Shakespeare, and Goethe, soars in that clearer air, which is above our human categories because it is the home of genius.

In days when lengthy treatises are written to expound the Critique of Pure Reason, it is still of importance as well as of interest to select one or two points by which to illustrate the lasting value of Kant. Of course such selection will and must be made in accordance with the writer's own predilections: yet it behoves every one to give a reason for the faith that is in him. The points which the present essay is intended to illustrate may be very briefly summarised. How did Kant surmount the standing opposition between Metaphysics and Empiricism? What were his views as to the relations between Sense and Thought? What opinion will he allow us to hold on the subjects of not-self and self, the personality of man and the permanence of matter?

1. To answer the first of these questions, it is necessary to recount the gradual development of Kantian opinions from a dependence on Leibnitz and Wolff to the free and original standpoint of the Critique of Pure Reason. When Mr. Mill speaks in a general way of the German school of thought as being enchained in the fetters of a false metaphysical method, the statement, though eminently untrue of men like Kant, is strictly true of a man like Wolff. Metaphysics to him was Ontology, the Science of Real Being, of things-in-themselves. Metaphysics dealt with such ideas as God, the immortality of the soul, the world as the totality of

phenomena, and the demonstration of these ideas was to be strictly *a priori*, i.e. to be entirely independent of experience. For Philosophy was to stand wholly out of relation to the increase and augmentation of knowledge by experience; it was defined as the science of that which involves no contradiction. In other words, Philosophy was to be merely the logical analysis of our ideas, the rendering explicit whatever was implicit in our thought. In technical language, "Wolffian philosophy reduced thought to a formal activity," or, in simpler language, it made the sole criteria of philosophic truth the laws of identity and contradiction. But these are purely logical laws, purely formal, purely analytic: and a theory which reduced philosophy to this sort of tautology of thought, to this endless analytic exercise of seeing that there is no contradiction in our ideas, to this *a priori* formality, must entirely sever it from all fruitful relation to life and increase of knowledge by experience.

A second point in the Wolffian philosophy was its Individualism. Wolff, as a disciple of Leibnitz, accepted the doctrine of monads. He believed that the world was composed of a number of individual substances which were independent and repellent. He could, therefore, not believe in any real relation between the individual monads.

Lastly, a third peculiarity in Wolff (as also in Leibnitz before him) was his view of the relations between God and the monads. The relation of the infinite to the finite could not be otherwise than a difficulty in the system: because God was only a monad, the first of monads, on the one hand, and therefore as being inde-

pendent and repellent, he could not stand in any real relation to the world; and yet, on the other hand, he had to be described as universal, an infinite being, who included in himself all reality, all substance, and the whole world, and therefore the monads, as being finite, could not be real at all.

From these three features of the Wolffian philosophy—its reduction of thought to an analytic activity, its individualism, its difficulty in exhibiting the relations between the finite and the infinite,—Kant gradually releases himself.

His criticisms on the first position—up to about the year 1763 or 1764—take two main lines.

In the first place, analysis will never explain the synthesis involved in scientific discovery. For the discovery of "Causes," for instance, cannot be reduced to a mere analytic activity. It is not the mere clearing up of our ideas; it introduces something new, which we did not know before: no logical laws of identity or contradiction will explain it: it is due to that synthesis, that putting together in one conception something new and what we had before, which is due to an increase of experience. The Wolffian analytic method, then, does not explain synthesis, does not lead to the discovery, *e.g.*, of "Causes."

In the second place, analysis can only give us what is possible, not what is actual; it can never lead *from* possibility to reality. You analyse your mind, and you find that in your mind there is the idea of a sovereign Being, who is perfect, infinite, omnipotent. Can you go on and say that therefore God exists? But "exist-



ence" is a fresh attribute which you have slipped in, which the mere analysis of your ideas can never demonstrate. Analysis can give you what is possible ; it can never give you what is actual : it can never justify the transition from the possible to the actual, from the subjective to the objective, from thought to reality. It is only experience which enables us to connect things with their real causes, and to connect thought with reality.

Such is Kant's criticism of the first feature of the Wolffian method.

In treatises entitled *Dilucidatio Nova* and *Monadologia Physica*, he expresses his rejection of Wolff's Individualism. To him the individual monads, independent and repellent, are absurd : in a world which is in certain senses a whole, an unity, there must be real relations between things. But on what ground do these relations between things exist ? To suppose anything like what Leibnitz and Wolff called "a Pre-established Harmony" between things is to be guilty of a too obvious illogical device to cover the gaps in scientific theory. In his earlier treatises, therefore, Kant falls back upon Spinoza and his Pantheism. Individual things must be related together to form a world, and the ground of this relation is an universal, which absorbs all individuality, *i.e.* God. The Universal therefore is really prior to the Particular in this sense, that God is the presupposition without which we cannot explain the world as a connected whole at all.

Afterwards Kant saw that this was the introduction of a *θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς*—of which Berkeley too was guilty in his system. The Universal, which is prior

to the Particular, is afterwards, in the time of Kant's maturity, explained very differently. The Universal is self-consciousness. But this we cannot yet explain. His early rejection of the Wolffian Individualism was due to a revival of Spinoza's idea of an Universal God.

We have now gone through two stages in Kant's early career—the stage of Wolffian Philosophy, and the stage of criticism on, and increasing emancipation from, the Wolffian method.

The third was a wholly empirical stage. It was the extreme limit of the reaction against Wolffian dogmatism and metaphysics. Metaphysics made everlastingly bricks without straw : it was ever analysing over and over again what are called *a priori* ideas, and postulating their existence as anterior and superior to experience. The artificial harmonies of Leibnitz and Wolff were just like those imaginative creations of Swedenborg, out of which he raised a system, as symmetrical and logically self-consistent as metaphysics claimed to be, and just as unreal and baseless, if we demanded any other criterion than self-consistency. But knowledge could never be educed out of analysis : for knowledge, synthesis was necessary, some adding of fresh matter, some grasping of new facts under new conceptions. Now, mere logical manipulation of ideas can, indeed, make them clear and distinct, but cannot *add* to them : it cannot make a synthesis. What was the inference ? Well, if thought cannot produce the necessary synthesis, it must be experience, sensuous experience prior to thought. And so Kant, carried to the furthest point of his reaction against Wolffian metaphysics, throws himself into the

arms of Locke. He believes with the English sensational empirical school, that the synthesis necessary to knowledge (*i.e.* the fundamental relations that underlie all knowledge) can be and are given in sensible experience.

This is his frame of mind up till about 1770, when Hume's philosophy awoke him, as he terms it, from his dogmatic slumbers. He had passed through the stage of dogmatic metaphysics as exhibited by Wolff's system, and discovered that it led him nowhere. He had thrown himself in consequence into the empiricism of Locke; and here, too, he had to find that empiricism strictly pursued led him nowhere, just as much as *a priori* metaphysics.

It was Hume's analysis of Causation which made such a profound impression upon him. Causation, of course, is a principle of synthesis, one of those fundamental relations which are necessary to physical knowledge. Is Causation then, as a principle of synthesis, given by experience? According to Hume, certainly not. All that experience gives is the fact of one thing following another: but the principle by which, on the occurrence of one thing, we expect with certainty the other to follow—this necessary synthesis—this fundamental relation of Cause and Effect—is not given in experience. A cause, strictly speaking, says Hume, we find neither in the world outside us nor the world inside us. An antecedent we do find, a cause we do not.

This criticism of Hume, the sceptic, might well startle Kant, the empiricist. For as emancipated from Wolff he had begun to suppose that the synthesis necessary to knowledge was given by experience, that it was implicit

in the natural world, and that thought could disentangle it by observation and analysis, and render it explicit. But here at all events, in that characteristic synthetic principle, the relation of Causation, it is not experience which produces a synthesis. And so was suggested to Kant the pregnant doubt, whether any synthetic principle could be given in experience at all. Mere formal, analytic activity of thought he had proved to be sterile: mere sensational experience he found to be a chaos. And so he begins to study in earnest the conditions which make knowledge possible, till in the Critique the truth dawned upon him—the truth which he expressed in the celebrated words, "Conceptions (ideas) without sensations are empty: sensations (perceptions) without concepts are blind." For knowledge, thought must supply the relations, and sensation the data.

In the "Prolegomena" we see more clearly what Kant's problem was in the Critique.

Two extremes in philosophy were before his mind—the dogmatic metaphysical extreme of Wolff, and the sceptical, individualistic extreme of Hume. It is absolutely important to remember that Kant was trained in the first, and was startled, and as he says "awakened" by the second, and that thenceforth it became his effort to understand both systems, to unite them and to transcend them. In view of these wholly divergent philosophical schemes, the problem which he conceived for philosophy, was in a true sense a critical one. For with a vast body of ideas supposed to be valid and *a priori* as Leibnitz and Wolff understood them, on the one hand, and on the other hand, a scept-



tical analysis, which undermined the whole metaphysical structure as used by the hands of Hume, the philosophical question almost necessarily became, What were the limits of knowledge? How much can we say we know, and why? Inasmuch as the one antecedent system had destroyed the whole metaphysical fabric of the other, a new start had to be effected, a new point of departure made, and the preliminary question had to be raised, What is knowledge? What is experience? How much is valid, and why?

What is knowledge? Well, we can take knowledge on the objective side, or on the subjective side. We can either ask, What are the faculties we possess for attaining knowledge? or, What are the characteristics of knowledge, such as we possess?

Let us begin with the objective side first.

Knowledge is expressed in a series of judgments—a series of propositions. Now judgments and propositions can be of two kinds.<sup>1</sup>

(i.) They can be explanatory (explicative) judgments, propositions, of which the predicate merely says over again the subject in an extended form, rendering explicit what was before implicit. For instance, we can say "All bodies are extended." In this case "extension" which we now formally predicate of "bodies" is an integral portion of what we naturally understand by "body." We do not add to our knowledge by such a proposition. At most we render it explicit. Judgments and propositions of this sort, we may call "analytical."

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of convenience, I give references to Max Müller's translation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (Macmillan, 1881), Max Müller, pp. 5-8.

(ii.) But there is another sort of judgments, in which the predicate does contain more than was asserted in the subject. These do add to our knowledge. They may therefore be called synthetic. For instance, when we say "All bodies are heavy," here we are attributing something to "body" which we did not understand simply by our original notion of "body."

Now, looking at these two species of judgments, there is no doubt which is the more important for us. Obviously those which extend our knowledge, the synthetic. Nor, again, are we at any loss in deciding that the best examples of analytical truth are to be found in Logic, *e.g.*, the law of identity A is A, and the law of excluded middle, "Everything is either A or not A." Nor, again, that "experience" will give us synthetical judgments: in the instance above given it is of course experience which acquaints us with the new fact that "body" is always accompanied by "weight."

But to Kant, animated as he was by a metaphysical aim, to see how far ideas, not due to experience, were to be held valid, how far metaphysics, as a science, was possible at all, the important question was, Can we ever get synthetic judgments, which are not due to experience? which are not *a posteriori*? Can we, in a word, have synthetic judgments *a priori*? and if so, how are they possible?

We can easily see why this was the important question for Kant. He had had bequeathed to him a whole host of *a priori* knowledge and *a priori* ideas, the validity of which reason was supposed to demonstrate: on the other hand, he found that the English school re-

fused to believe in reason, refused to believe in any *a priori* truth, and pinned their faith to experience. Naturally, then, the first thing to decide on was, can there be any judgments which add to our knowledge, which at the same time are not due to experience?

Now, both mathematics and physics yield us instances to the point. Both are based on synthetic judgments *a priori*. For take these two propositions—"A straight line is the shortest between two given points." That is a mathematical judgment; and this: "Every event has a cause." That is a physical judgment. Are these synthetical judgments? Assuredly. The mere notion of a straight line is something *qualitative*—it can yield us no notion of quantity, such as shortness or length. Again, "Every thing which happens" does not include in itself the conception of an antecedent like cause. So, then, these are certainly synthetical judgments. But are they *a priori*? That is the important point. Are they due to experience or not? Well, they not only make a certain affirmation, but they make it necessarily and universally. But experience can never give the criteria of necessity and universality. If a judgment is necessary and universal, it must be *a priori*. So, then, we have now established the fact that both in mathematics and physics there are judgments which are both synthetic and *a priori*, that add to our knowledge and yet are not due to experience.

There is no doubt that in metaphysics, too, we have synthetical *a priori* judgments. When we say, for instance, that "every soul is immortal," we are undoubtedly making a judgment which adds to our know-

ledge, and certainly is not due to experience. But now the question comes, What is the validity of these judgments? On what do they depend? *How* are they possible? We have seen that they exist. Are they equally valid? Does the judgment, "every soul is immortal," contain as much necessary validity as the judgment that "every straight line is the shortest between two given points"?

In order to answer this question, it is obviously necessary to inquire into the conditions which render the synthetical *a priori* judgments of mathematics possible. If we may for a moment anticipate the conclusion of Kant's treatise, and present it in a very brief form, we see that mathematics and physics alike depend on certain *a priori* mental forms and categories, *e.g.*, Space and Time, etc.; and this is what renders their judgments both synthetic and *a priori*. But it is the very essence of noumena, like the Soul and God, to be beyond conditions of Space and Time. The conclusion follows that there can be no science of things-in-themselves, or noumena.

From this very brief statement of Kant's argument we see that mathematics serve as a sort of clue or touchstone of legitimacy. The outcome of Hume's analysis is to deny the validity of *a priori* truth. The answer of Kant is, 'Look at mathematics: Have you not there *a priori* truth?' 'Yes,' answers Hume; 'but these *a priori* of mathematics are only analytical; they have only to do with the relations of our ideas, they do not deal with matters of fact.' 'No,' answers Kant, in his turn, 'the *a priori* judgments of mathematics are



synthetic, not analytic; and if you allow *a priori* synthetic judgments in mathematics, as you have to allow them, why not in physics?'

Such appears to have been Kant's point of view in putting mathematics in the forefront of the argument. But we have to remark that Kant would appear only to have read the *Enquiry* and not the *Treatise* (the earlier work) of Hume.<sup>1</sup> It is true that he treats mathematical judgments as analytical in the *Enquiry*, but he does not so treat them in his earlier work.

If, then, we take Hume's earlier work, Kant's treatment will have to change. For Hume asserted in the *Treatise* that the mathematical judgments were indeed "synthetic," but he denied their accuracy. He only allowed the mathematician "an indefinite approach to exactness." In other words, he denied their universality and necessity, or attempted to get (much as Mill does) a qualified necessity out of sensitive experience. If so, then Kant's criticism is this: Experience itself is impossible without *a priori* mental action. For this is the meaning of Kant's question,—“Whence could our experience itself acquire certainty, if all the rules on which it depends were themselves empirical and consequently fortuitous?”

2. So far we have been considering knowledge on the objective side. We must now<sup>2</sup> turn to the faculties which give us knowledge,—the subjective side. Two meet us at the outset: *Sense* and *Understanding*.

<sup>1</sup> The matter, however, is doubtful. Cf. Max Müller's *Kant*, vol. i. Pref. p. xxvi., and the authority there cited.

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller's *Kant*, p. 18.

1. Sense, by which objects are *given*.
2. Understanding, by which they are *thought*.

In this crude form of the antithesis between Sense and Understanding, Kant is merely falling back upon the definitions of preceding philosophy. The whole of his critical work in the “Analytic” would be useless, if, for instance, the definition of sense had to remain as it was,—that by which objects are given. As this is a very important point, we must examine it rather closely.

Let us turn back again to the two opposing streams of philosophic thought which preceded Kant,—the German school and the English school. Both would, in a measure, accept the distinction between the Sensibility and the Understanding, which Kant here lays down. But the German school of Dogmatists would consider the Understanding the main and important element in knowledge, while the English school of Sensationalists would consider the Sensibility the paramount element. To the first, Sense would be very imperfect, confused, vacillating Understanding; to the second, Understanding would be nothing but decaying Sense.

Again, when Kant was at that stage of thought in which he was under the influence of Locke and the English school, and in which he believed in the importance of experience rather than thought, he too would have used precisely the same definition of Sense, viz., that by it “objects” are given.

What then is Kant’s advance on such a position in the Critique? What is his real doctrine in the matter? It is the discovery that Sense and Understanding are

not two separate avenues of knowledge, each of which can give us definite results. It is not true that by the sensibility "objects" are given us at all. To constitute an object requires the participation of the Understanding, bringing a category of its own to bear. Sense only gives us what Kant calls "the manifold," *i.e.* the flux, the chaos of sensations. To fix, determine, isolate a sensation, to relate it to other sensations and to distinguish it from them so that the result is a definite and distinct object, this can only be done by the Understanding bringing to bear its categories of substantiality and individuality; or in other words, Sensation, pure and simple, only gives "the manifold" the "*ἄπειρον*." A perception from which results "an object" is the bringing a category or categories to bear on the manifold.

This is the meaning of "Conceptions without Sensations are empty, Sensations without Conceptions are blind." The "manifold" requires the imposition of the category before it can become anything at all. The two processes of thought and sensation are alike required to explain experience.

Thus, in the mature stage of Kant's thought it was impossible for him to acquiesce in the distinction which asserted that Sense gives us objects. To constitute an object at all requires the participation of "thought."

Two conclusions from this may be drawn.

(i.) In the first place, we have here Kant's answer to the English Sensational school,—an answer which is as pertinent to Mill as it was to Locke and Hume. Experience, says Kant, does not mean the

paramount importance of sensation to the exclusion of thought. You fall back, you say, on experience, and experience you hold to be the result of sensitive contact with something outside us, whereby objects are perceived. In other words, you think that your senses can give you definite objects. Kant answers that this is a confusion between two distinct processes,—sensation and perception. In sensation there is no thought, but what is the result? That sensation only gives us a bewildering chaos. Perception is something different. It is the bringing order into this chaos of sense; it is the relating of sensations to one another whereby definite objects are perceived, which can only be done by thought. Thus, that experience on which Hume relied to destroy the functions of thought, is itself found to be impossible without thought.

(ii.) A second conclusion is that Kant's early definition of Sense and Understanding is merely provisional, a definition which he intends to replace by something better hereafter. But even when we get to the "*Æsthetic*," Kant still talks as if sense could give us objects. The correction is only given in the "*Analytic*." This exemplifies a rather curious characteristic of Kant's method that "he often makes his way into a subject by aid of the ordinary modes of representing it, though the result of his speculation is to take him beyond those modes."<sup>1</sup>

3. To answer our third question, we must turn to the section on the first analogy of experience.<sup>2</sup> It is clear that in an ordinary experience we assume a certain

<sup>1</sup> Caird's *Kant*, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller's *Kant*, p. 160.



permanent matter underlying the objects of sense. How comes it that we have this belief in the permanence of substance? How comes it that the Scientist's dogma of the Indestructibility of Matter and the Conservation of Energy has won such general acceptance? According to Kant the reason is that we have here a law of mind—mind prescribing to its experience, or rather, rendering its experience intelligible.

In all changes of phenomena substance is permanent, and the quantum thereof in nature is neither increased nor diminished. If we are to have, Kant thinks, an intelligible experience at all, we must assume that underlying the appearances and the changing objects of sense there is a permanence of substance. He does not mean that we are to assume the existence of a noumenon, or thing-in-itself, as a substratum of things; but that this permanence of substance is a sort of mental prescription which our intelligence brings to bear on our experience: that, in this respect, mind is prescribing to nature. In order to have any real experience at all, we must assume that that which serves as subject and not as predicate, *i.e.* substance, must exist through all time.

If we wish to see how necessary this principle of the permanence of substance is in our experience, we have only to consider that without it we cannot understand change. "Only the permanent can change," says Kant, a sentence which reads like a paradox, but which is readily understood if we remember that change means "a succession of two different states in the same thing." For if of two things one goes utterly and the other remains, this is not a change: there being no means of

comparing the one with the other in relation to something which is permanent. All change, then, in phenomena is nothing but a change or alteration of their form : *i.e.* a metamorphosis, a different way of existing, of the substance. When wood is burnt it does not vanish, but turns into ashes and smoke : the whole sum of matter is not changed, only the forms.

It is instructive to compare the way in which Mill arrives at his definition of substance in his *Examination of Hamilton*.<sup>1</sup> The definition given of "Substance" is "The Permanent Possibility of Sensation;" but how is such a conception arrived at? We observe our own sensations coming and going, and we gradually learn to look upon sensations which we might experience as a sort of permanent background to those we are at the moment experiencing. Or, in other words, *from change we get to permanence*: from the fleeting sensation of the moment we arrive at the permanent background or substratum of those potential sensations, which we call Substance. Kant's mode of procedure is the exact opposite of this: only from the permanent can you derive the notion of change—it is only with the presumption of a permanent substance that you can understand changing phenomena. But Mill thinks that out of change you can get, by some habile shuffling of sensations, permanence.

From this first analogy of experience the consequence flows that we can never conceive as possible objects of experience either the creation of anything or its annihilation. Annihilation and creation are equally incon-

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xi.

ceivable, because Substance must be held to be permanent, can have no origin therefore, or perish. Of course these propositions are only true of phenomena: all we mean is to exclude from the principles of physical science both the creation-theory and the annihilation-theory. But whether these theories might have validity in other regions than mere experience or physical philosophy, we are not here concerned with discussing.

4. And now what has Kant to tell us with regard to self? We know how "the Self" was construed by the Scholastics, by Descartes and by Berkeley, and how Hume brought havoc into previous philosophy by his destructive analysis. How did Kant solve the problem of our Identity?<sup>1</sup>

All states of consciousness have at least this much in common, that they are *mine*. I can bring them together and unite them in consciousness either immediately or mediately. If I could not do this, if there were a chasm between different states of consciousness, so that I could not proceed from any one state to any other, this would come to the same thing as if a part of them were not states of consciousness to *me* at all. This, then, which joins together all states of consciousness, by the bond that they are mine, is the Ego of Thought, or rather as Kant says, the "I think." The identity of this "I think," this conjoining act, in all consciousness, is absolutely essential to knowledge. It is in fact the originally synthetic unity of apperception—the power of combining every state of consciousness together by the fact that they are *mine*.

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller's *Kant*, pp. 95 seq., 108 seq.

We shall see more clearly what Kant understands by this "synthetic unity of apperception" if we distinguish it from other things which might be mistaken for it.

( $\alpha$ .) In the first place, then, we have to distinguish clearly between this "apperception" (which is a "*consciousness of self*") and a "*knowledge of self*." When we speak of the possibility of a knowledge of self, we mean the knowledge of self as a noumenon, as, *e.g.*, when Mansel says "the Self is a power conscious of itself," we mean that in our knowledge we have an immediate intuition of *what* our "Self" is. But a consciousness of self does not amount to this: for, in the first place, it is merely discovered in the "activity" of the understanding—when the understanding is bringing its categories to bear upon its sensible experience—*i.e.* in the act of experience; and secondly, it is only the knowledge *that* I am, not the knowledge of *what* I am (as the other was), for it only amounts to the analytic judgment  $I=I$ , directly we regard it apart from its active functions in knowledge. So that the knowledge of Self, which Kant allows us and calls "apperception," merely amounts to the knowledge *that* I am, without acquainting us further with the intimate nature of Self.

( $\beta$ .) On the other hand, we have another distinction to make. Kant, we know, speaks of an "internal sense" just as Locke spoke of "reflection" as internal, while "sensation" was external. Now, is apperception the same thing as the "internal sense"? Certainly not. For what do we mean by the "internal sense"? That



which gives us the passing "states," *i.e.* the feelings, sentiments, and reflections of our consciousness. But this internal sensibility is subject to a certain *a priori* form, *viz.*, "time." What makes the intimations of this internal sense possible is the fact that they take place in time. "Time" is the form of the inner sense, just as "Space" is the form of the outer sense. But the "synthetic consciousness" is not subject to any form of this sort, which limits its possibility. Exactly as it binds together every part of external sensible perception by the underlying bond that it belongs to *me*, that it is *mine*, so too, it is the synthetic consciousness which binds every phase of internal sensibility by the uniting bond that it is mine. It is not, therefore, the internal sense which is limited to passing phases and states of feelings, and is subject to the form of Time, but it is the underlying consciousness, which reduces all these states to unity by the assertion that they belong to *me*.

We shall see this more clearly if we think for a moment of the manner in which the self is treated by the English school—by Hume and Mill. By them the Self is reduced to fleeting states of consciousness—or as Mill says, to a *series* of such states. This represents just the knowledge of one's-self that is given by the "internal sense." Is there anything more? Hume says, No; the links by which we connect these states are so many pure fictions. Mill says,<sup>1</sup> the only "final inexplicability" which besets this view of the Self is that a series of states should be aware of itself *as* a series so as to *remember* past states and *expect* future ones.

<sup>1</sup> *Examination of Hamilton*, chap. xii.

Now, it is exactly this final inexplicability which Kant meets by his "synthetic apperception" or consciousness. This link which binds our states of consciousness together, which enables, that is to say, the series to be aware of itself as a series, is the underlying unity produced by the knowledge that these states successively and altogether belong to *me*. This is the function of the synthetic unity of apperception, and it is just this which differentiates Kant's view from that of the English school. According to the latter, the Self is resolved into "states of consciousness" which are given by the internal sense according to Kant. But besides these passing states, there is a link which binds them together: and that is "the synthetic unity of apperception."

Just as Kant, by this view, opposes the sceptical analysis of the English school, so he equally opposes the pretensions of a school of Transcendentalists, like Descartes. When Descartes, for instance, said, "*Cogito ergo sum*,"—I think, therefore I am,—would Kant agree with him? Yes, if he meant that my thoughts are all mine, if he meant that the fact that I think proves *that* I am. But when he went on to say that therefore "*what* I am" (the self) is an object of immediate intuition, there Kant would not follow. Because each state of consciousness is bound by the link that they are mine, it does not follow that I know by this means *what* I myself am, I can only know *that* I am.

That in all these points the treatment of Kant has been found satisfactory, or that it appears in accordance

with the tone of philosophic thought which is prevalent in England, is a great deal more than can justly be asserted. The limitations which Kant introduced in our knowledge of "self" have raised some indignant remonstrances in those of his critics who attempt to expound him from a Hegelian standpoint. The relations between Sense and Thought which the Analytic portion of the "Critique" establishes, have met with but little favour from the school of Spencer and Lewes. Especially in the later form of the scientific doctrine with regard to Time and Space, has it been supposed that a genuine philosophic improvement has been effected. As this is a point of more importance than appears, it is worth while to contrast the various doctrines on the subject somewhat more in detail.

According to Kant, Time and Space are forms of the Sensibility.<sup>1</sup> It is necessary here to seize the essential point, and not be led astray by the words of the definition. Perhaps Kant was not quite right in attributing them wholly to sense; perhaps the term "forms" is not exactly a happy instance of nomenclature. For the word "forms" seems to imply that there is something which has power to mould such and such contents in a particular way. But Time and Space are merely "possibilities" of our perception of objects; they render perception possible; they are conditions of sensible experience. They ought not to be called *antecedent* conditions, for they do not exist before experience of objects. But they are *concurrent* conditions; they render experience possible. The main point is, that experience in-

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller's *Kant*, pp. 20-36.

volves the seeing things in Space and feeling them in Time, and that therefore Time and Space are not *a posteriori* (i.e. not due to successive or simultaneous sensations), but *a priori* (i.e. rendering successive or simultaneous sensations possible).

Now, there are at least two views on this subject, which are quite distinct from Kant's view, and which may be conveniently contrasted with his.

1. The ordinary, natural, common-sense way of speaking assumes that Time and Space are two realities, existing *in rerum naturâ*. Space especially is often represented as something substantial, the great empty "locus" of the world, the great receptacle of all things, which exists in complete independence of us.

Now, this is the view pre-eminently of those whom Kant calls "the mathematical natural philosophers"—men like Newton and Clarke. It should be, too, the opinion of all those who term themselves "realists," whether men of science or others. It is not difficult to see why it should have commended itself especially to mathematicians; for if Space and Time are two realities, existing outside of us *in rerum naturâ*, it is quite clear why geometry and arithmetic, which are based on ideas of Space and Time, should include principles which are at once necessary and universal. On the other hand, it is not hard to see the difficulties of such a theory.

*In the first place*, if Space and Time are substances, in this sense, why do they not affect us like substances? *In the second place*, this theory gives us two self-subsisting nonentities, infinite and eternal (which exist, yet



without there being anything real), for the sole purpose of containing in themselves everything that is real. For Space and Time, if we abstract from their special determination by objects, become nothing but the potentialities of relations among objects. *In the third place*, a special difficulty occurs when we turn from what these philosophers believe about Space and Time to what they believe about God. God is real, Space and Time are real. Why, then, are God's perceptions supposed to be *not* limited by Space and Time? If Space and Time are real, then the dilemma is that either God sees and feels in Space and Time, or else that besides God there exists something which is uncreated, eternal, infinite, and immutable.

2. The other view which is taken of Space and Time is the one common to the Empirical school and to Leibnitz, and to those whom Kant calls "metaphysical natural philosophers." According to this view, Space and Time are "relations abstracted from experience." Leibnitz spoke of such as "confused ideas of the relations of contiguity and succession"—sensation being to him interpreted as "confused thought." Empirical philosophers would leave out the word "confused." To Mill, for instance, Time is abstracted from our experience of change and succession. Space is based, partly on the action of our muscular sense as exerted in connection with the sense of contact, partly on the prior notion of Time, as *e.g.* when we speak of "the duration of a certain muscular effort."<sup>1</sup> Now, there is one advantage in this view. It enables us to understand why Time and

<sup>1</sup> See *Examination of Hamilton*, chap. xiii.

Space are limited by our own experience of objects, and cannot be assigned as elements belonging to "things-in-themselves." They are conditions of our sensitive consciousness, simply because they are gained by abstraction out of our experience of objects. Naturally, then, it is only phenomena, and not noumena, which are in Space and Time.

But then, how on this supposition can we explain the necessity and universality of mathematical axioms, which deal with Space, or of arithmetical procedure, which is based on Time? According to this view, of course, mathematical judgments are empirical. But if they are empirical, how can they be made in anticipation of experience, and why, as we have seen, do things of experience necessarily conform to the conditions thus determined? Why must all triangles have their three interior angles equal to two right angles?

Or again, Empiricists tell us that perceiving things as existing beside one another, and perceiving things as succeeding or being simultaneous with one another, we therefrom abstract ideas of Space and Time. Well, "things existing beside one another," means that they are in different places; "things simultaneous or successive," means that they are either in the same point of time or in different times. So that our perceiving things as existing beside one another simply means that we perceive things in Space; our perceiving things as successive or simultaneous means that we perceive them in Time. Little need then is there for our abstracting Space and Time, when we already see

things in Space and Time. So that the Empiricists merely presuppose instead of explaining. The fact is, that there is no way of talking of our experience which does not presuppose the existence of Space and Time.

To this Mr. Spencer and Mr. Lewes add the consideration that these so-called forms, though *a priori* to the individual, are *a posteriori* to the race. It is not too much to say that this consideration from the point of view of a Kantian, completely mistakes the conditions of the problem. The problem is this,—Does not experience presuppose some mental *δυνάμεις*, some mental activity? And the answer given by Mr. Spencer and Mr. Lewes is, that experience does presuppose them in the case of the individual, but does not in the case of the race. That is to say, that individual experience is one thing, race experience wholly another. But why the mere notion of time should alter the meaning of experience is left wholly unexplained. If experience means one thing to me, why should it mean a wholly different thing to me + human ancestors + animal ancestors, etc. etc.? Is not the truth this, that the term "race experience" conveniently covers such incommensurable things as *experience* and *animal reactions on stimulus*? But the latter are not experience *in the sense in which we want it explained*. Still the Kantian explanation of experience remains untouched, because we desire to understand experience as *we* feel it and see it and hear it, and not to have substituted for it some other far away and wholly unreal version of what may possibly stand for experience to the ape.

There are of course other points in the Critique of Pure Reason which hardly any one is interested in maintaining as a modern gospel. Such are the categories with their derivation from the dry bones of formal logic, the absurd "Schematism" with the strange role which the Imagination plays, and nearly all the curious technicalities of expression, albeit it may be true that technical terms are the counters of the wise and the stumbling-block of fools. And to these we must perhaps sorrowfully add the whole of the Critique of the Practical Reason, or at least we must acknowledge that if it comes to a choice between the Logic and the Ethics, we ought unhesitatingly to reject the latter. But despite many deductions, the work of Kant remains in its essential outlines as an everlasting possession for the human intellect. In the revolution that it made in the relations between the human intelligence and the objects of its study, Kant's boast is amply justified. The "*monumentum ære perennius*" of Kant is worthy to be compared with the master-work of Copernicus.



## VIII.

# KANT AS A LOGICIAN AND AS A MORALIST.

IN the case of most men there is in all probability a certain want of symmetry and consistency between their theoretical conceptions and their ethical practice. Sometimes the theory is better than the practice; sometimes the man is a sceptic in his beliefs, while yet in his conduct he acknowledges notions and ideals speculatively incapable of proof. In ordinary experience the former is perhaps the commoner case of the two; but in an age like ours, when speculative beliefs are losing their hold on the intellects of men, while practical duties, however explained and understood, have a force which is incontestable, although they may be ultimately derivable from habit or authority or survival, the latter case is no infrequent one, at all events with the thinkers. We are accustomed, however, to make a sharp distinction between our intellectual convictions and our moral emotions. More and more, possibly from its very intelligibility, Materialism is conquering in the intellectual sphere; but we harden our hearts to its Logic, when it pushes its forces into the region of moral feeling, or else, if pressed, we take refuge in the assertion that Ethics

belong to those departments of feeling where ideals and poetry and imagination hold their sway. Materialism, we know well, is at its poorest when face to face with ideals: no one could ever become a poet, who fed his imaginative fires on atoms and molecules. Here then at least some men take a last stand, side by side with fancy and romance, though how it may fare with Ethics to be ranged with such allies is a doubtful question. But they whisper to themselves the consoling reflection that every man in his heart of hearts knows himself to be something higher than his circumstances, or his bodily needs, or his composing molecules, and they deprecate beforehand the inevitable criticism that the world of experience is at all events something which we can see and handle and be sure of: while the other world of noumenal existence can only be taken on trust, and rests, for all we know, on all sort of mystical delusions.

However much we acquiesce in these and similar contradictions in our present lives, we should be slow to formulate them in a philosophic system. Philosophy since the time of Locke has not been held to be the incarnation of the common-sense or the common opinions of mankind. But Kant, with a paradoxical earnestness which is almost noble, if it were not so baffling, has put this latent opposition between Logic and Ethics into the forefront of his companion systems—the Critique of Pure Reason and the Critique of Practical Reason. The opposition is this, that whereas the main results of his Critique of Pure Reason are destructive, the main results of his Critique of Practical Reason are constructive. In

both spheres, the practical and theoretical, it is Reason which is active. Just as Hutcheson, for instance, believing with Locke that all knowledge is derivable from Sense, asserted in his *Moral Philosophy* that all morality is derivable from Sense too : so Kant, having in his theoretical exposition shown the activity of Reason in knowledge, declared equally explicitly and positively that it was Reason also which was the main agent in us as Moral Beings.

How comes it then, that the practical activity of Reason in morals, is so different in results to the theoretical speculative activity of our Reason in knowledge ? This is the first point we have to see. Let us first state categorically the conclusions of Kant, and then gradually work up to the conclusion along the road which he travelled.

The three main principles or postulates of Morality, according to Kant, are—(i.) The immortality of the soul ; (ii.) The freedom of the will ; (iii.) The existence of God. Without these, morality could not exist ; reason, as exercised in practical matters, could not work.

When we turn to these, not as moral postulates but as matters of reason and knowledge, when, that is to say, we change from the practical to the speculative sphere, we see that the first two may be resolved into the principle of the absolute independent existence of the Ego and the principle of an Unconditional Cause. The principles, therefore, the validity of which as factors of knowledge we have to consider, are briefly Self, Freedom, and God.

Now, the conclusion of the Critique of Pure Reason

is this. There are three ideas of Reason which it is impossible to prove and comprehend—

- i. The existence of the Soul or Ego as a real subject.
- ii. The existence of the World as a single unconditioned system (or in the totality of its conditions).
- iii. The existence of God as a supreme Being.

There remain, then, three principles disproved as matters of knowledge which we have just seen to be the essential postulates of morality. Morality depends, says Kant, on God, and Self and Freedom. An inquiry into the conditions of knowledge shows that it is impossible to prove the existence of God and Self and Freedom.

How comes it that these three ideas of Reason are speculatively inadmissible? The conclusion depends first on what is to be understood by a noumenon or Thing-in-itself; and secondly, on what the functions of Reason in the Kantian sense must be held to be.<sup>1</sup>

I. What is a noumenon? We answer vaguely the thing as it is in itself, whether Mind in itself or Matter in itself; whereas the Phenomenon is only the thing as it appears to us, coloured by our own particular avenues of knowledge. Thus a particular object, say a marble, we describe as being hard, and round, and of a certain colour; but this is merely its phenomenal aspect, the marble as it appears to us, and is grasped by our senses. The noumenal aspect would be the marble in its essential structure on which qualities like hardness

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Max Müller's *Kant*, p. 205 seq., pp. 258-288.



and roundness and colour depend, the *ἰδέα* or *εἶδος* of it as Plato would say, the "forma" of it as Bacon would say. Marble as a phenomenon is hard and round and coloured : marble as a noumenon, is the object in *itself*, in its essential structure.

Have we any knowledge of noumena? Now, as means of knowledge we have the senses, the understanding, and what Kant calls pure apperception. Can the senses apprehend noumena? No, for what the senses apprehend is subject to conditions of Time and Space : and the noumenon or thing-in-itself must not have any such limitation. The whole conception, for instance, of the Soul, would be destroyed if we were to conceive it as subject to conditions of Time and Space, for what then would become of its immortality and its immateriality? It is clear that the senses cannot perceive a noumenon.

But can the understanding then apprehend noumena? The understanding works by means of categories, just as sensibility has as its forms Time and Space. Will the categories give us noumena? If so, we must abstract from all the sensuous material, which is, as it were, worked up by the categories, for this is clearly phenomenal. But if we abstract from the categories all Matter, *i.e.* all reference to possible experience, what do they become? Merely empty forms which certainly can give us no hint of any possible object or objects, such as noumena, lying outside the sphere of experience.

There remains only that pure apperception of which Kant speaks, the unity of self-consciousness. Will this

help us here? The unity of self-consciousness means that link of "I think," by which all our conscious states are bound together. And corresponding to this, there is certainly the idea of object-in-general, the correlate of subject-in-general. But this is only the  $x$ , the unknown quantity of metaphysics, like the unknown quantity which mathematicians call  $x$ . And this is too obviously indefinite to be considered the knowledge of anything at all.

It seems then that we have no faculties for grasping the noumenon. Where then is the use of talking about it, and, as it were, postulating its existence?

Noumenon can be defined in two ways, either negatively or positively. If we define it negatively we can say that *it is not the object of our sensuous intuition*, or, in other words, that it cannot be apprehended by an intelligence which depends for its matter on sense.

If we define it positively, we should have to say that *it is the object of a non-sensuous intuition*, i.e. it could be apprehended by an intellectual intuition. Defined in this latter way, i.e. positively, a noumenon cannot even be imagined by us: for we cannot even imagine what kind of intuition it could be which should be purely intellectual and have nothing to do with the senses or sense-perception. An intellectual intuition would be a sort of cogitative sense or a sensitive understanding—powers which we can never picture to ourselves, though, of course, we can only say that human beings can never have them, not that they are impossible.

But if noumenon be defined in the negative way, as not an object of our sensitive intuition, it is not

without its use, for it is then a limitative conception (Grenz-begriff) marking the boundary of our cognition, teaching us that, for us, knowledge is only of phenomena, and never can be of noumena. Holding before us negatively that which our understanding cannot reach, it suggests the limit of our own possible realm of knowledge as being the result of certain categories of the understanding which are only of use so far as they are applied to sensuous experience, which in its turn is only possible under conditions of Time and Space. Knowledge can only be of phenomena, not of noumena.

If we are still baffled, if we want to know how we ever got to the idea of noumena, if they are so utterly beyond our reach, the only answer is this:—The ideal of a noumenon can only arise from an intelligence which possesses an ideal of knowledge to which its actual knowledge does not correspond. In what sense can our intelligence be said to possess an *ideal* of knowledge of this kind? Partly, perhaps, because the unity of self-consciousness makes us desire to find a correlative unity which is objective—not only an indefinite  $x$ , but something accurate and defined. But much more because of the Reason, in its transcendental exercise, which is ever overleaping the bounds of experience, of which we get a thorough explanation in the last division of the Critique, the Dialectic.

II. The function of Reason in this matter is to be the parent of dialectical illusions. This work of Reason may be described in a threefold way.

1. In the first place, it seeks to explain, and to “explain” means to derive one part of our knowledge

from another by means of a syllogism : and as this process may be continued regressively, Kant terms this function of the reason "prosyllogising." To prosyllogise merely means to find syllogism after syllogism regressively in order to explain a particular phenomenon or particular relation of Cause and Effect. Thus, for instance, supposing our syllogism to be this, "All bodies are changeable. This is a body : therefore this is changeable." Reason seeks to explain this. The condition of changeableness is a composite structure. Hence we get our prosyllogism thus : All that is composite is changeable, etc. etc. So, too, Kepler's laws were "explained" when they were deductively inferred from the Newtonian theory of gravitation, *i.e.* they were only true on condition that Newton's laws were so.

2. Again, Reason seeks the unconditioned. Any given object of experience, any phenomenon is conditioned by one or more objects or phenomena. Reason seeks the conditions of the phenomenon, and attempts to seek them so exhaustively that it will be unnecessary to presuppose any others. It seeks, therefore, not merely the conditions of a given conditional truth, but the totality of these conditions, its task remaining unaccomplished unless the series of conditions is complete. For here it is actuated by the desire to give unity and system to the cognitions of the understanding, to derive our knowledge from the smallest possible number of original principles.

3. And now, further, let us see what this involves. The unconditioned—the absolute totality of conditions than which nothing further need be presupposed,—this



is obviously the limit of all experience; it is identical with the "thing in itself," and therefore cannot be an object of possible experience. On the one hand, we are bound to represent it as the goal which reason tries to reach: on the other, we are equally bound to declare that the unconditioned cannot be a possible object of experience. In other words, it is an idea of the Reason.

This end, set up by the Reason, Kant called "an idea," to expressly distinguish it from a "concept," and to suggest the Platonic use of the word. The idea is not a concept, for a concept is either abstracted from objects or else makes objects cognoscible, like those concepts of the understanding which Kant elsewhere details. The concept has always a relation to a given existence. But this is not true of the idea. Like the Platonic ideas, the ideas of the Reason are eternal exemplars and models of things, which can never be found by experience: but there is this difference, that whereas the Platonic idea was not only a model of what ought to be, but also in a real sense of what was, the Kantian idea is only a model of what ought to be.

Now, how does illusion come in with regard to these ideas of the Reason? Clearly, when this absolute, this unconditioned is regarded, *not as an idea, but as an object*. In itself the thing *per se* is the limit of experience, which can never itself be an object of experience. But when the Reason suggests it as an object of experience, as well as its limit, then error comes in. In this case it makes what Kant calls a "dialectical syllogism," assuming that, because we have got an idea of the unconditioned, therefore the unconditioned exists. Error

though this is, it is yet an unavoidable one. The critical philosopher may be on his guard against the delusion, but he cannot cure the delusion any more than the delusion of the senses can be cured when the moon rising on the horizon appears bigger than when high in the heavens. We know that the size has not really altered, but the delusion of the senses remains the same. Just so with this delusion of the Reason which makes the ideal limit of experience into a possible object of experience. A metaphysical philosopher like Leibnitz falls into the trap, and thinks that we can know things *per se*: the critical philosopher, though to him too the tendency is unavoidable, yet sees it to be a delusion.

Are there any special ideas of the Reason with regard to which this illusion is most significant and most common? There are three ideas, answers Kant,—the Soul, the World, and God,—ideas which he proceeds to derive from the categorical, the hypothetical, and the disjunctive judgments severally. But this derivation is just one of those instances wherein Kant's dependence on Logical forms is puzzling and unnecessary. Taken in a broader and simpler manner the derivation of these three ideas of the Reason is far more easy and natural. Reason seeks the unconditioned as the limit of the conditioned. In how many ways is conditioned existence given? In three ways: it is given as internal phenomenon (existence within us), as external phenomenon (existence without us), and as possible existence (or object in general). Reason, then, with regard to each of these, seeks its own unconditioned as the limit of the conditioned existence. It seeks, that

is to say, an unconditioned within us, an unconditioned without us, and an unconditioned in reference to all possible being. Or, in other words, there are three ideas of Reason : the Soul (which is the unconditioned within us) ; the World (the complete sum of all phenomena) ; and God (the sum of all possible realities, the absolutely unconditioned).

When these three ideas of Reason—the Soul, the World, and God—are treated not as ideas, but as the possible objects of experience, then they serve as objects of three pretended Sciences, — Rational Psychology, Rational Cosmology, Rational Theology. To refute in detail these three sciences is the object of what Kant calls the “Transcendental Dialectic.”<sup>1</sup>

The Critique of Practical Reason gives us the reverse of this picture. What was our question in the Critique of Pure Reason ? It was this. Is Pure Reason adequate to an *a priori* knowledge of things ? The subject then with which we were occupied was one relating to the “cognisableness” of things. The condition of knowledge, the part played by Experience, the part played by Reason, these were the subjects discussed : and the general conclusion reached was, that if Reason attempted to transcend the limits of experience, if it attempted to construct ideas of its own, apart from all relation to experience, it fell into difficulties, contradictions, paralogisms, antinomies, and therefore that the three *a priori* ideas of

<sup>1</sup> The question, how men came to believe that they knew so much, when in reality they know so little, is, according to Prof. Max Müller, a problem for the Philosophy of Language to determine—a philosophy which is to serve as a supplement to the Kantian philosophy. Cf. Max Müller's *Kant*, vol. i. Preface, xxviii.

Reason stood on no just foundation as far as knowledge was concerned. The speculative Reason then was condemned in its pure untrammelled exercise ; for the simple reason that the mind in knowledge was conditioned,—conditioned by experience gained through avenues of sense.

When we come to the Critique of Practical Reason, however, the question is quite different. It is this—“Is Pure Reason adequate to an *a priori* determination of the will?” Our subject *now* concerns the motives which act upon the will. The sphere of investigation is absolutely different, for in Ethics the mind is unlimited, unconditioned by sense. Again, what is it that determines cognitions? Obviously, Perceptions. What is it that determines volition? Motives or Principles. Before, the question was as to the relation of Reason to external objects ; here, the relation of Reason to an internal element,—the Will. The general conclusion of Kant then in Ethics is, that Reason is capable of influencing the Will purely from its own self, and so the ideas of God, Soul and Freedom, come back.

The manner in which these ideas return may very briefly be described. In the world, as we know it, each event is conditioned by all ; there is no free origination, there is no first cause. But though we meet with nothing but a seemingly endless chain of effects in the physical order, the case is altered in that moral order, the theatre of whose action is man. In morality, it is not the man, as our senses present him, with whom we have to deal, but man in his own inner personality, in



all the power and majesty of his real self. Here we come across a cause really free and unconditioned, the first free cause, the human ego. It must be so, for how else are we to construe to ourselves that majestic ideal of duty which man imposes on himself, how else shall we understand that man is responsible? If he *must* do, he *can* do: if he is responsible for action, he must be capable of originating action. Freedom of the will is, in the opinion of Kant, the necessary postulate of Morality. But not only is man free, but he has an immortal soul within him; and he has a Divine Providence above him. For clearly what Reason in its practical exercise demands for man as moral, is a *summum bonum*. The various ends we strive for as human creatures are so many different goods, conditioned by one another, limited and controlled in various ways by our several circumstances in life. But reason over and above these goods demands something more, an absolute good, unconditional and supreme. Nor is it doubtful what this *summum bonum* is, for it must be the union of the greatest virtue with the greatest felicity. The absolute good for which our natures crave is none other than this—a maximum of virtue and a maximum of felicity. It was this that the Epicurean really desired, though with him the two notions which meet in the *summum bonum* were held to be but different aspects of the same thing; supreme felicity meaning supreme virtue. It was this, too, at which the Stoic aimed, though he reversed the relation, and held that supreme virtue meant or included supreme felicity. But we cannot thus analytically unite the two notions: they can only be synthetically joined;

that is to say, they must be regarded as the relation of Cause and Effect, either virtue causing felicity, or the desire for felicity being the motive for virtue. Alas! experience gives us no synthesis such as we desire. Whatever our wishes or our efforts may be, in the world as we know it, the two "moments" in the idea of the absolute good appear hopelessly disunited. Virtuous we may be in a fragmentary fashion, but we shall not therefore be happy; happy we may be once and again, but in these rare moments we shall not necessarily be virtuous. Who shall deliver us from this discord? Once again we must boldly pass the rubicon which divides man phenomenal from the noumenal ego. In the inner house of the spirit we find two ideas, which justify and explain man's *summum bonum*. To be supremely virtuous presupposes the immortal existence of the Soul, which recognises such an ideal as its aim. To be supremely happy involves the existence of God, who being at once cause of the natural world and its circumstances, and cause of the moral world and its laws, will unite the two, and will give us felicity if only we are virtuous.<sup>1</sup>

What are we to make of this striking contrast between the practical and the theoretical spheres? Here we have three practical postulates—Immortality, Freedom, and God, without which, it is affirmed, Ethics cannot exist; and three theoretical dogmas—the Soul, the Totality of Things, and God, which are declared to be baseless and unprovable. Logic tells us

<sup>1</sup> To this undignified position does Kant relegate God: he exists as the means of gaining happiness for the individual.

that we cannot prove the existence of a simple, indivisible, eternal Soul, of a world which is self-conditioned and complete, of a God who is an Absolute First Cause; and Ethics gives the lie to each assertion in turn. The practical postulates contradict the theoretical conclusions; we act on principles which our reason refuses to substantiate as verities. The theological way of looking at similar discords is to distinguish between Reason and Faith; if we cannot understand, we are yet to believe. But Kant gives us no such desperate loophole as this. It is Reason which discovers its own deceptions, and it is Reason which postulates its Ethical principles.

Nor does the method in which Kant meets the difficulty do aught but aggravate it. The distinction between man as phenomenal and man as noumenal may be possibly helpful in metaphysics, but it reads almost like irony in morals. To say that free will, immortality, and God belong to us as noumenal while they do not belong to us as phenomenal, is only to mock at our difficulties, not to solve them. For morality means a series of acts done *here* and *now*. These acts are phenomenal, done in a phenomenal sphere; in other words, they belong to the ordinary sphere of experience. Therefore, so far as our everyday actions are concerned, we have, and can have, no free will, no God, no immortality. What serves it then that we have them in some transcendental way? What is the use of them to us, as hoping, fearing, struggling creatures in this world of experience and particularity and phenomena? There can only be two ways of dealing with this Kantian

paradox: either we must give up the Logic for the Ethics, or the Ethics for the Logic.

The course of later speculation has accepted the former alternative, and given us an apotheosis of Reason of which Kant in his most mystical moments would never have dreamed. Many circumstances contributed to this later phase of Teutonic Idealism; but if we desire to know the matter apart from its historical accidents, no small part of the determining cause will be found to reside in the presuppositions of Kantian Ethics. For here at once was the outline of a work of Reason which was almost boundless in its scope, and unlimited in its cogency; and if any security for the precarious ethical structure was to be found at all, it had of necessity to be discovered in the exaltation of Reason in the logical sphere, and the depreciation of the criticism which the Treatise on Pure Reason had suggested. And so while Schopenhauer transformed the autonomous will of moral man into a great impersonal Will, the essential thing in itself of the Universe, Hegelianism metamorphosed the Kantian dialectic of illusion into a dialectical process of the higher Idealism. But from this point of view many changes had to be made in the logic of Kant. Absolute Idealism would not hear of *a priori* and *a posteriori* elements of knowledge; it would not believe in the decisive severance between Sense and Understanding, between Perception and Conception; it would not accept the disparagement of a science of Rational Psychology. It began to talk of "the inexplicable surd in the Kantian philosophy," the survival of the old Adam of scholasticism, the resurgence



of the fatuous opposition between rational and experimental knowledge. For there was one point in Kant's system which must ever be a stumbling-block to transcendental systems—the insistence upon experience, the implicit belief that in all knowledge there must be *something given* to the mind, as well as something contributed by the mind. The “something given” must be an evidence of a reality outside of and apart from intelligence, a foam-spot thrown up on the waves from the lower deep of unknowable Matter. Here, at least, is a datum which the “synthetic consciousness” cannot master, but must assimilate as best it may: it is not born of mind but contributed to mind: it is that which makes all knowledge arise from a fundamental opposition between a self and a not-self. The growth of knowledge must depend to a large extent on contact with this “manifold;” without it conception is empty, the mental forms and categories are devoid of content. And this, too, it is which so conclusively shuts up all knowledge within the barriers of experience. When the categories of the understanding have this material to work upon, then there is fruitful growth and increase of experience; without it there is only form and no content, only analysis and no synthesis. Hence, too, it follows, in the Kantian Logic, that when Reason attempts to construct notions without this appeal to sense, to the “something given,” there can ensue nothing but error and antinomy, paralogism and delusion.

What then must be the Hegelian device? Obviously the inexplicable surd must be eliminated: it must be shown that in knowledge there never is the something

given as it were *ab extra* ; that nothing can be in the mind of man which is not what it is in virtue of mental action ; that the unknown  $x$  is but a phantom, an impossible attempt to view a thing apart from its relations. From this too it will follow that what in our ignorance we call *a posteriori*, meaning thereby a sense-given datum, as it were, an external thing, in reality only means an object in which the mind has not yet found its own unity. Sensation is not one thing and Thought another, but the process of Knowledge is one,—a differentiation followed by an integration ; distinction ending in unification.

And lastly, the outcome of the whole matter is reached in the attitude adopted to the work of pure reason, which is now viewed not as the parent of error, but the seat of the dialectical movement of “the Idea.” Kant, for instance, attempted to show that Rational Psychology was a delusive science, because in it that human consciousness which we only get to know by distinction from external objects, is regarded as a thing-in-itself, quite apart from its foreign and external relations. In experience we only know self-consciousness by contrasting it with the objects of desire and of will, or else with the various departments in which knowledge is possible ; but when Wolff made a science of Psychology, he meant by it the science which deals with a human soul, single and indivisible, and discoverable in its simplicity and indivisibility. What now is the criticism of Hegelianism ? It declares that the self-consciousness by itself is no analytic unity, as Kant declared, but the highest category we can reach ; it

assumes that the mind goes out of itself in the ingathering of knowledge, but returns upon itself in the conclusions of Psychology. The Pure Reason is not condemned either to analytical action merely, or to the formation of delusive, because empirical notions, but is affirmed to be capable of synthetic action, simply because it is the fountain-head and source of all science, the Alpha and Omega of knowledge. So that there is after all a transcendental noumenal Ego, which we can know as real and not merely envisage as an ideal, and hence that rational principle which has one expression in the determination of experience and in our knowledge of a world, has another expression which consists in the consciousness of a moral ideal, and an absolute and categorical Moral Imperative.

These are hard sayings, and it is not within the capacity of the present writer either to accept them as saving truths or stigmatise them as mystical errors. But one thing is at all events clear, that they involve a considerable departure from the standpoint of Kant. That standpoint is one of criticism and not one of dogmatism; a revolt from Wolff, and not a relapse, however skilfully veiled, into Wolffian metaphysics. Nor yet was Kant an Idealist in the common sense of the word. Here is a luminous passage on the point—"The proposition of all genuine Idealists is contained in this formula:—all cognition by sense and experience is nothing but mere appearance, and truth is in the ideas of the pure understanding and of pure reason only. The principle which throughout governs and determines my Idealism is, all cognition of things from pure under-

standing or pure reason only is nothing but appearance, and truth is in experience only.”<sup>1</sup>

Further, it may be pointed out that to embark upon the Hegelian speculation is for ever to bid farewell to any reconciliation with Science and Scientists. Towards Kant the Scientists have sometimes exhibited an attitude of genuine reverence, because of the clear manner in which he laid stress upon experience, but it will never be possible to explain to them how the Absolute Higher Idealism is to be distinguished from those crasser systems of Scholasticism which have earned an unwelcome notoriety in opposing the free march of the scientific spirit. Possibly the reconciliation with Science may be deemed unadvisable, but it is no light thing, in England at all events, with its clear-headed reliance on experience, and its positive spirit, thus ruthlessly to cut mental speculation adrift from all relation to the most virile and energetic movement of the time.

Must we then close with the other alternative and relinquish the postulates of the Kantian Ethics, because they are speculatively inadmissible? Must we deny the supremacy of the Practical Reason because we have discovered the fatal illusive tendency of the Speculative? Are we to bid farewell to the ideas of Soul and God, as a far-off Eden of our youth, which is for ever severed from us by the flaming sword of intellectual analysis? The answer depends on our conception of human nature and the relation of the Ideal elements to the Actual in human life. Is it ever possible to conciliate the Ideal with the Actual, to assimilate

<sup>1</sup> Kant, *Prolegomena*, etc., S. 204; *Hart*. iv. 121.



the truths of Feeling and the truths of the Understanding under one common category? If it be impossible, the conclusion is not that the Moral Ideas are speculatively inadmissible, but that Emotion, Feeling, Poetry may not be brought under intellectual definition. For Kant's moral postulates are akin to poetry, and poetry is, in a deeper sense than was probably intended by Mr. Matthew Arnold, the criticism of life. The Ideal is the criticism of the Actual, or, perhaps, its masterful antithesis. We are not what we think, but we are what we feel. And if some men are so immersed in the Actual that they have no time to lift up their eyes to the hills "whence cometh their help," it is with them as with those born without a sensitive imagination,—they are both happier and less happy. For the others Schiller's saying remains true, "und in dem Heute wandelt schon das Morgen." It is a truth of Poetry at all events, and therefore, perhaps, a truth indeed.

## IX.

### A PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

ONE of the main interests of that movement in contemporary English philosophy, which has been sometimes termed a Hegelian revival, is its attitude towards the controversy between scientific thought and religion. There can be no doubt that so long as English modes of thought are dominated by the systems—half-logical, half-scientific—of Mill and Bain, priest and savant can only be engaged in truceless war. Between a theory which is at base that of Sensationalism, and such larger notions as are conveyed by the terms “Universal” or “Absolute Spirit,” there can be no common standing-ground. Nor is the matter much improved by the device of Herbert Spencer, who in his desire to reconcile Science and Faith, consigns all ultimate ideas—including God—to the *otium cum dignitate* of the Unknowable. To most men, except possibly to those who are so weary of the internecine struggle that they will accept any verbal compromise which appears to allow some little breathing-space, such a solution as this, which sends the very ideas they are most in earnest about to an honourable detention in an apocryphal limbo, must appear as the most inhuman trifling with their difficulties. It is not unnatural, therefore, that the German metaphysical systems, whose

boast it is to reconstitute the damaged authority of the Absolute, should have been winning new converts, and that men should turn to Hegel with a longing wish to find him *μάντιν ἢ ἱετῆρα κακῶν*, a high priest of Reason and a healer of spiritual discords. For after all, there is an uneasy feeling, even amongst philosophers, that unless philosophy can explain the religious instincts of humanity, it is at best a luxury rather than a necessity, and has not yet vindicated its position as an intellectual guide of life.

The problem itself became acute in Germany after Kant's two Critiques of Pure and Practical Reason. The relation between the Moral Life and the Intellectual Creed was, by him, left in such absolute discord as to appear to stamp his whole system as transitional and prophetic, rather than final and definitive. When a man gives as the result of a long inquiry into the conditions of knowledge the conclusion that Ideas of Reason, such as the Soul, Freedom, and God, are in themselves contradictory and wholly incapable of proof, his reader naturally believes him to stand on the ordinary grounds of the scientific understanding, and to be, in the fashionable language of the day, an Agnostic. And when in another volume which treats of Ethics, he discovers that Morality stands on the foundation of the three Ideas which Logic had overcome, the conclusion is of course expected that a philosophical system of Morality is impossible and absurd. But the peculiarity of Kant's position is that he believes the Ideas of Reason to be in a certain way re-constituted by the requirements of Ethics. Hopelessly impugned in the theoretical sphere,

they are restored to more than their pristine authority in the practical sphere. Destroyed by the speculative inquiry, they are proved by the moral inquiry, and the practical reason has, we are told, the primacy over the logical reason. What is the conclusion? Clearly, that a practical proof is superior to a logical one, that speculation is not justified in obstinately following its own separate interests, but must bow to the theorems of the practical reason, that moral certainty is higher than theoretical. To believe this is to disbelieve in Philosophy altogether. The great value of Kant's system is exactly this—that it brings the student to a dilemma in which he must finally choose one of two courses. Either he must stand or fall by the logical understanding, and then give up as hopeless the moral and religious problem; or he must transform the office of Reason, and believe that so far from showing the inadequacy of its own highest ideas, it can and does vindicate them, and that wisdom is justified of her children. The English school of thought is inclined to accept the former alternative. Jacobi, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel chose the latter.

To characterise the system of Hegel by any single expression, or to sum up his position in a series of sentences, is of course impossible. When Fichte deduced the whole Universe from the Ego, the ladies wanted to know what Madame Fichte thought of such masculine arrogance. When Hegel talks of the evolution of "the Idea," as if that explained all thought, and all nature, and all history, the usual criticism is a curious mixture of impatience and pity. Yet the central object of the



Hegelian system is by no means mystical or repellent, and lies sufficiently close to men's interests to demand a careful inquiry. For it is nothing else than an attempt to show that all thought is, on its human side, a gradual approximation to God, and on the Divine side, a gradual revelation of his own nature. And the means by which this result is sought to be obtained is nothing else than an unfailing belief in Reason, in its power to correct the imperfect notions of logic and science, in its power to construct and justify ideas of its own, in its own irrefragable and absolute authority. Thus both of the contending parties in modern thought receive the due recognition of their claims: the partisans of religion have the satisfaction implied in the provable necessity of the religious impulse, while the claims of the enlightened inquirers are duly considered in the trust that is reposed in the work of Reason and Thought.

It is the merit of books like the recent work of Principal Caird, entitled *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*,<sup>1</sup> that they put the Hegelian doctrine in a tolerably intelligible shape before English readers. Expressions are of course to be found which the versatile critic is sure to resent; "the hidden logic of a spiritual process," "the transcendence of all that is relative and finite," "the perfect return upon itself, which mind in its self-consciousness for the first time explicitly reveals,"—this is a terminology with all that mystical and sonorous ring from which English common sense revolts. And perhaps, next to the term "mental rela-

<sup>1</sup> *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, by Principal Caird. Glasgow: Maclehose, 1880.

tions," there is none more absolutely irritating to the scientific logician than the metaphysical Shibboleth of "self-consciousness." Yet the mysticism, such as it is, is not so hopelessly meaningless, as is found in some of the sentences of Herbert Spencer—when, for instance, he talks of "the raw material of *definite* thought which remains *after* the definiteness which thinking gives to it has been destroyed," and "something which persists in us as the *body* of a thought to which we can give no *shape*,"—where the second half of the sentence clearly cancels the first half: and the result is not, as in the case of the Hegelian pupil, a baffled sense of something new, but the superfluous confusion of what was trite and familiar. Almost the first step in the comprehending of Hegel is, in truth, the discovery that its intention is to show the insufficiency and falsity of the ordinary logic: almost its first blow is delivered upon that fundamental principle, which it is accounted the glory of Plato to have discovered, the law of identity, which affirms that  $A=A$ . Unless a man can understand that so long as we affirm that a thing is what it is, we cannot possibly be said to know its nature, that knowledge proceeds not by simple affirmation, but by negation and distinction, he had better give up the task of deciphering Absolute Idealism as hopeless. It is better for him, and far easier, to acquiesce in such definitions as that opium sends a man to sleep "*parcequ'il a une vertu soporifique*." But if he has begun to realise the fact that the ordinary logic is a strange compound of rather incongruous elements, deriving its deductive portion from Aristotle, its induction from scientific empiricism, and its

descriptive introductory portion from a rather antiquated psychology, he may possibly feel in some dim way that it is not adequate to all the lights and shadows of human consciousness, and that, at all events, an attempt to examine the fundamental basis of thought, on which all scientific methods rest, is advisable or even necessary.

The Hegelian procedure depends on a distinction between Reason and Understanding, and turns on the limited, and therefore unreal, character of the categories given us by the latter. In this aspect it is a polemic against Kant, because it inverts the position assumed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, that the ideas of reason are incapable of realisation. To Hegel, on the contrary, it is only reason which can give any meaning to the categories of the understanding, which, unless viewed from its larger, more concrete, more comprehensive standpoint, are partial, limited, and abstract. So far as the problems of religion are concerned, an admirable illustration of this mode of philosophising is furnished by its treatment of the proofs of God's existence. Kant, as is well known, reviewed in his *Dialectic* these proofs in order, and, one after another, showed their hollowness and insufficiency. How shall we prove God's existence? Shall we argue *a contingentia mundi*? Shall we say that because all things in this mortal sphere are mutually dependent, we must assume in the last resource some being who is independent? Shall we say that we—looking at the fact that we can only go back from effect to a cause which is in its turn an effect of some higher cause, and so on in infinite regress,—

must, for our own peace of mind, arrive at a cause which is uncaused, a First Cause, a Free Cause? Perhaps this is the most ordinary, and to most minds a satisfactory, proof of God's existence. And yet the logic of the understanding must condemn such procedure as illogical. To say that because we only know of a ceaseless chain of causation, we must assume that somewhere or other there is a first or last link, where the chain ceases, is as though, despite our conviction that the world is round, we should yet walk to the horizon to find its extremest edge. To say that because the world is contingent, it must have an author who is absolute, is at once to deny that absoluteness we seek to prove, because at all events the world appears necessary to its author (inasmuch as it exists) and therefore sets limits to his independent and self-contained existence.

Shall we then fall back on the celebrated teleological argument, and say that because there are everywhere marks of design, there must have been a divine intelligence at work in the world's creation? Yet here again Kant tells us that our conclusion is too large for our premises. Our argument may prove the likelihood of an Intelligence, but it is merely a human one and not divine. The adaptation of means to end, in the case of a machine, proves the existence of the inventor, because with certain materials given ready to the hand—materials which possess original properties, and therefore limit the possibility of their own usefulness—some one must have adapted them so skilfully in their mutual relations that they work out the designed end we see. But to God, the materials with which he works are not given



with certain original and unchangeable properties. He is supposed to have himself given them, in the first instance, these natural forces and properties. Can we seriously conceive of God as having stamped certain things with qualities often contrary and conflicting, in order that afterwards he might show his skill in overcoming the difficulties of the material by skilful combination and adaptation? Or again, can this line of argumentation ever prove the existence of Absolute Goodness in the Artificer? By seeing the relation of means to end in the wing of a bird, we may say that the skill everywhere displayed implies the existence of an Intelligence greater than ours, but not necessarily absolute. Or, once more, if I know a man to be good, I can then see how his actions are all designed to promote the triumph of goodness, but if I have only his actions to go by, shall I be likely in every case to see proofs of his goodness?

“Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shrieks against his creed.”

There remains, then, the last of these arguments, the argument of Anselm and Descartes, which is termed the Ontological Proof. In its simpler form it asserts with Descartes that, since I know myself to be imperfect, I must have some standard of absolute perfection to measure by; to which logic answers that a belief in something more perfect than myself, not necessarily absolutely perfect, is all that my premiss warrants. In its more philosophical form it asserts with Anselm that, because the idea of God is absolute perfection, and absolute perfection necessarily includes existence, there-

fore God exists. To this logic has the scornful rejoinder that an idea in the mind is one thing, and existence is another, and that because I think of three hundred dollars, it does not by any means follow that I have them in my pocket. The general conclusion is that whether I rely on the cosmological, or the teleological, or the ontological argument in seeking to prove God's existence, the verdict of the logical understanding is in each case that I am trusting to a broken reed.

The way in which the religious Hegelian treats these proofs throws a good deal of light on his philosophical procedure. To him they are consecutive steps of the aforesaid "hidden logic of the spiritual process." Taken one by one, they are faulty; taken together, they form the grades of the mind's ascent to God. Moreover the order in this case is most important, for the first is the most faulty of all, and the last is, in one aspect, actually a true account of the state of the case. Our first step starts from the feeling that the world as we know it is transitory, limited, partial, and the inarticulate cry, which is at the bottom of the feeling, loses its force when it becomes articulate. As "children crying for the light and with no language but a cry," we commence the upward path of that dialectical process which is to lead from earth to heaven. When reduced to its logical form, the argument, such as it is, loses its cogency: we are taught by its unsatisfactoriness that it is only the first step, and must be immediately deserted for something better. The next step, then, is to view the relation between God and the world under the category of Causation, or under the device of a Final Cause. This

is the stage of optimism, of the notion that everything has an end or object, that everything is for the best, that the world has an all-wise Creator, and we an all-good Father. Here is clearly an advance on our former position, by all the interval, for instance, which separates Leibnitz from Plato, or the Christian from the philosophical Gentile. But, viewed in its logical aspect, the teleological argument is too arbitrary, too mechanical, too anthropomorphistic. Optimism is immediately confronted by Pessimism: Teleology is answered by Evolution. And so we are driven on by negation and antithesis from the lower idea to the higher, from the sphere of logical understanding to a deeper metaphysic. The last of the arguments really conceals the truth, though it is a truth but imperfectly comprehended. The destructive criticism of Kant proceeds on the supposition of the absolute distinction between Existence and Thought. God as Idea is one thing; God as Existence is another. But transcendental metaphysic refuses to acknowledge the distinction. There is nothing higher than thought: if in thought we discriminate between being and thinking, it is thought itself which has made the distinction, and can therefore transcend it. Thought cannot but be the fundamental principle of all things, because every sceptical argument itself depends on the validity of thought. Thus, if we understand by God the Idea in this sense,—*i.e.* the Thought which is higher than our own, the Divine Self-consciousness which reveals itself gradually to our consciousness, which is the inner truth and secret of all spiritual and material development—to ask if God exists is an idle

question. If God be not, there is nothing; οὐκ ἔχω προσεικάσαι, παντ' ἐπισταθμώμενος, πλὴν Διὸς, εἰ τὸ μάταν ἀπὸ φροντίδος ἄχθος χρὴ βαλεῖν ἐτητύμως.

It is by this and similar methods that the necessity of religion is sought to be proved. That the truth or inner core of things is the Thought or Idea, which is above and beyond its realisation either as matter or spirit, Self or not Self, which unrolls itself in an ever fuller development throughout the course of human history,—such is the essential notion of German transcendentalism. Now if this central or primary Thought or Idea be envisaged as the Divine Self-Consciousness, or, in other words, God, we have the same philosophy viewed as a philosophy of religion. The necessity of a speculative idea of religion rests on two main principles. In the first place, it is held to be clear that a finite individual spirit is not only finite, but also infinite: in the second place, it is obvious that ordinary thinking on religious matters is full of defects and contradictions. If we think of our inner experience as spiritual beings, we find ourselves no sooner conscious of the finitude and transitoriness of things than we are irresistibly impelled to fall back on a larger order of thought, where the narrow limits recede into infinity, and the ceaseless change and decay gives way before an abiding fixity; or, to put the same thought into a simpler form, to be conscious of a limit is to have already transcended it; to know the bounds of our own personality is to be aware of a boundless region which encircles it. Thus the religious impulse is not satisfied either by that Materialistic Individualism which leaves no room for God, or



that Pantheism which swallows up the Individual in God. It seeks some means of satisfying both the claims of its own personality, and the claims of the Absolute and the Infinite. And on the other hand, it is soon made to feel that the ordinary logical understanding, when exercised on religious matters, exaggerates its difficulties instead of solving them. For the method of the logical understanding is to set things over-against one another in hard, isolated opposition. It sets Freedom over-against Necessity: it opposes Mind to Matter: it posits God as the negation of the Individual. It converts each notion and idea into a crystallised abstraction, where any living relation, or play of action and reaction with other things, is impossible. It brings the world into the Leibnitzian dilemma of repellent monads, without giving the least hint of any subtle links of union. Man is one thing—limited, bounded, impotent: God is another thing, unlimited, boundless, omnipotent: and how there can be any relation between the two is of course an unsolved mystery. Or it regards the action of spirit upon spirit in the light of material objects existing in Space and Time: so that, for instance, the union of two souls in a mutual love can only be conceived as the juxtaposition of two things adhering together, not that sort of union which at once affirms and destroys their separate identity. Or once more, if it tries to construe to itself what the theologians call the grace of God in the human soul, it makes use of some materialised metaphor of “the wind blowing where it listeth,” in which case the language of religious emotion “I live, yet not I, but God liveth in me,” becomes a

strained and hyperbolical mysticism. If God be just and yet also merciful, then Justice must be conceived as accepting some compensation in order that Mercy may have its way ; God must sacrifice his Son in order that he may have mercy on mankind. It is the unsatisfactoriness and contradiction of this narrowly logical way of looking at things (which appears in the more strictly philosophical problems just as much as it does in the religious) which leads the metaphysician to desire some higher organ of truth than the Understanding, and to find in the Reason the gradual process of that higher thought, which advances by negation and antithesis from the less to the more perfect notion, which posits its affirmation, is met by a negation, and then advances to a more adequate idea, wherein the difference is swallowed up in unity.<sup>1</sup>

To this view of the operations of Thought and Reason there are obstacles in most men's minds, which appear wellnigh insuperable. The difficulty of grasping the main idea is no inconsiderable one. What our senses tell us we know ; and what logic tells us we know ; but what this " dialectical movement of Reason," this " profounder logic," this " inner logic of a spiritual process " may be, we are for the most part at a loss to conceive. We are quite aware that the logical understanding leads us in its interpretation of spiritual truths into difficulties, contradictions, and paralogisms ; but this is the penalty it pays for its own admirable lucidity,

<sup>1</sup> See especially chaps. vii. and viii. of Principal Caird's *Philosophy of Religion*.

and we have at least the negative satisfaction of knowing where we are. But in this "twilight of the Gods," where we have to unlearn what has been the laborious effort of our growing intelligence, where, for instance, we have to realise that A can be both A and not A, and that an unity does not mean the exclusion of differences, but their inclusion or supersession, there is a baffling sense of confusion and discomfort, a curious blending of imagination and knowledge, an inability to breathe as in some rarer and finer æther of thought. What, for instance, sounds a greater fallacy than to say, because our human faculties are conscious of a limit, that therefore they have transcended it? Is it not, we ask, a confusion between the power of imagining something beyond, and knowing what is beyond? The prisoner can imagine green fields and babbling brooks beyond the limits of his cell, but all the time he may be in Clerkenwell. In one sense, because he is shut in within four walls, he yet can transport himself beyond them; but is this knowledge or fancy? He can imagine the surrounding country; he can even know that such a country exists; but he does not and cannot know what its features are, and his constructions of such a country are, as we say, ideal, poetic, imaginative. So, too, if we transfer this metaphor—as old as human thought—to our own relations with the Infinite, we say that we can imagine limitless space and omnipotent force, but to know is to define by relations, and definition is limitation. To know the Infinite, then, is absurd: for the Infinite must be limited in order to be known; that is, the Infinite must become finite. Thus the Absolute

is shivered with contact with the Relativity of all Human Knowledge.

And yet much may be said on the other side. In the first place, to apply the conditions of ordinary logic to a system which is reared on the demolition of the logical understanding is to ignore the postulates of the theory. In the second place, it is clear that the position of such a believer in Relativity as Mr. Herbert Spencer is quite as illogical as the antagonistic theory is assumed to be. You cannot possibly say that human faculties are strictly limited to what is relative and partial, and yet declare the existence of an unknowable Absolute. If I declare such an unknowable to exist, it exists for my thought, for my consciousness; and in that case, it is not unknowable. For the fact is, that if our intelligence were strictly relative and limited, we should never know that it was so, just as a child does not know that it cannot reach the rainbow. Intelligence cannot be both relative and conscious of its relativity; the two elements of the theory are incompatible. In the third place, the believer in the ordinary logic is for ever debarred from understanding even his own personality. How can he construe to himself his Responsibility and his Determination? Freedom to him is one thing, necessity is another. That the highest freedom is a conscious submission to law is really grotesque from the point of view of logic, though it is exemplified every day of our lives in our ordinary experience of humanity. If Hegelianism can in some measure make us understand the unity in difference of our own spiritual life, it is no small triumph to have achieved.



Perhaps it is harder to accept that absolute division between Understanding and Reason, on which the profounder logic is reared. For the essence of Hegelianism is to subsume all differences and discords in the unity of "the Idea," to make us believe that our consciousness is not compounded of a definite number of faculties, as imagination and fancy and understanding and reason, all clearly docketed and pigeon-holed, but a living and developing unity. Yet the discord between the logical understanding, which is after all the practical guide of our lives, and the Reason, which possibly we do not know, but dream about, when the world is shut out from eye and ear and mind, is as a great gulf fixed. Nor is much really gained by any such division of our minds one against another. We are what we have learnt that we are; and we are not and never can be what we ideally desire. The reason, which lives by the death of the understanding, is the Kronos who eats his own children. Uranus will always save some logical Zeus to overthrow him. Only by showing that Reason is not the annihilation of our logical modes of thought, but their perfecter fulfilment, can a philosophy hope permanently to commend itself to a practical generation. And that it is the intention of Hegelianism to effect this is somewhat hard of comprehension by those who find that the formula of initiation is a disbelief in the Law of Identity and Contradiction.

As a Philosophy of Religion, these transcendental doctrines are exposed to all the usual difficulties which beset the attempt to make a speculative theory of the Divine. One such difficulty is always near the surface ;

it is to combine in an harmonious whole the historical element of Christianity with the philosophical. Is Christianity a revealed religion? If so, there must be allowed to have occurred once, under conditions of time and space, a serious interruption of the natural history of man's spirit. Is religion explicable as a perfectly normal product of human feelings,—a product which has a history, a development, an evolution? Then the Christian religion must have its place among the incidents of man's natural progress, and the supernatural revelation must disappear. Which alternative must we adopt? There can be no doubt which of the two has found most favour with the philosophers, with all their apparatus of heredity, and descent, and organic development. The natural history of religions has been everything; the supernatural origin of Christianity has been nothing. The historical elements have been quietly ignored or referred to antecedent spiritual conditions; the philosophical elements have everywhere received due emphasis and elucidation. But, according to the interpretation of Principal Caird, we are told that "the idea of organic development is in no way inconsistent with the claim of Christianity to be regarded as a religion of supernatural or divine origin."<sup>1</sup> It is as though a man should believe in the Ascidian origin of human beings and yet believe them to have been divinely created on the sixth day. One cannot believe both natural uniformity and miracle; one cannot pin one's faith equally to the development of species and the Book of Genesis.

<sup>1</sup> Introd. to *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 354.

Even greater difficulties surround the question of the organ of religious thought. It is always possible to make a sort of philosophical defence of Faith: it is at least plausible to say that as every certainty which requires to be understood demands another certainty, we must come at last to an immediate certainty which shall absolutely exclude reasons and grounds; and that a feeling of certainty which appeals to no reasons and grounds is Faith. We may even cover this flight into space by a dignified name, as Jacobi did, and call it the *salto mortale* of human reason. But we must be under no illusions as to what we have done. If we elect to abide by Faith, which is a feeling, we submit what we at the same time term our "higher self" to a merely sensationalistic touchstone.

"In such access of mind, in such high hour,  
*Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired.*"

Within the range of feeling, as Principal Caird remarks, the rapture of the religious mystic and the rapture of the sensualist stand on exactly the same ground. From the point of view of Society, one is, of course, differentiated from the other; but that does not make any difference in the feelings, viewed in their own nature. And if it be a hard saying to affirm that a fashionable voluptuary and a revivalist preacher are equally the slaves of their feelings, it must be remembered, on the other hand, that "im ganzen, guten, schönen resolut zu leben" is an ideal equally removed from both. But to call Reason the organ of the Divine is perhaps a bolder flight than any *salto mortale* of Jacobi. If it be Reason which transcends the finite, then it is not the Reason of

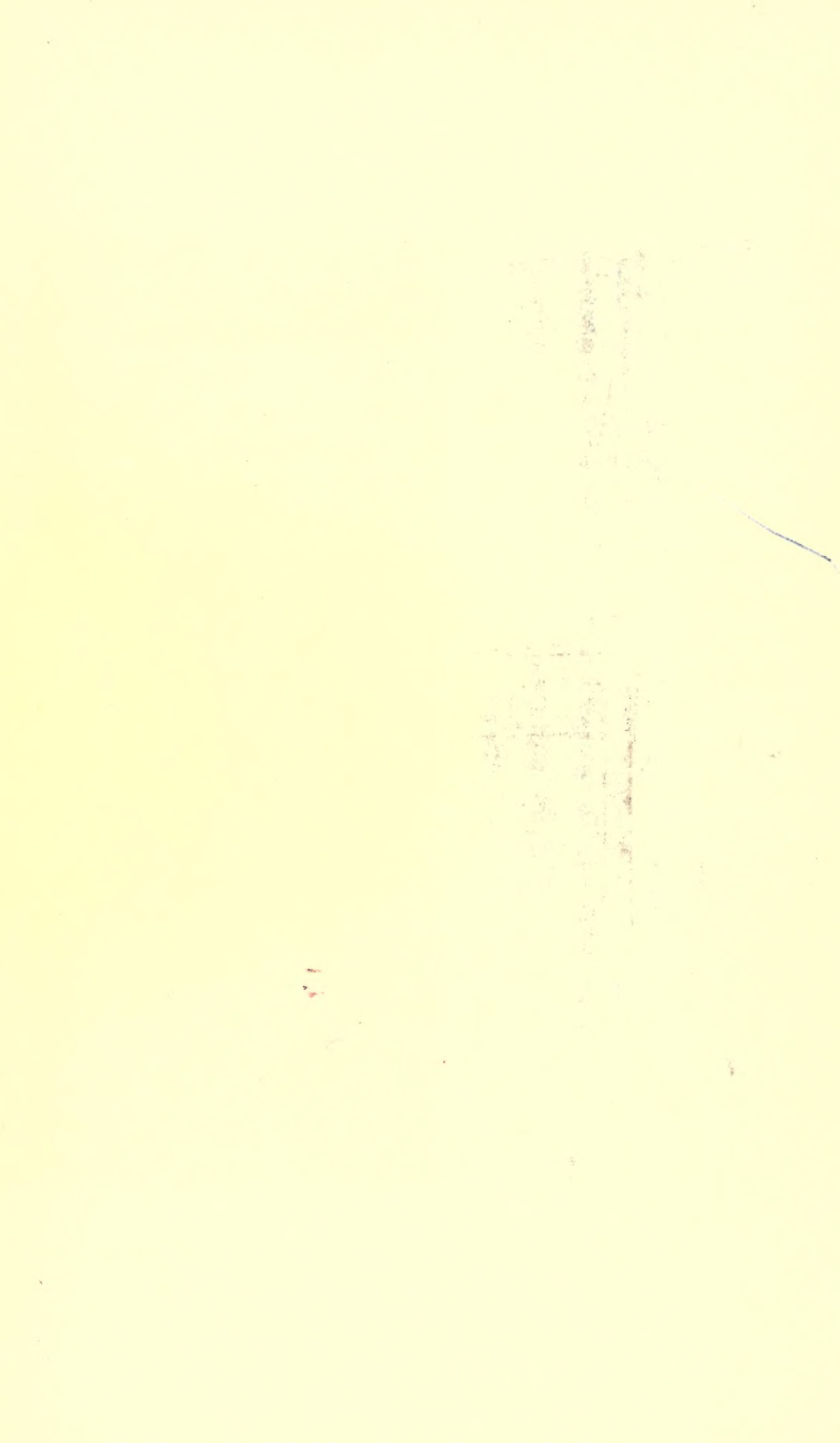
any given individual, but the Absolute Reason of the System of Things. To seek to comprehend it by any of our categories is to do it dishonour. To construe to ourselves the absolute self-consciousness is to render it at once relative, partial, limited. It is the negation of ordinary thought, and yet not the negation, but the completer fulfilment. It is the antithesis of Logic, and yet it is a profounder Logic. How are we to conceive it? If we are to be conscious of it as something beyond our limits, is this knowledge, or is it imagination, is it mediated, or is it intuitive? If we are to believe that our individuality rests upon the Divine Infinite, is this Reason, or is it Faith? Is it a feeling, or an intellectual act? "*La raison*," we know well, "*c'est pour les raisonnables*;" and in this sense of the term the members of that class are few indeed. And what can we say of Worship and Prayer in this reference? To worship the Omnipotent is hard; to worship the Unknowable is harder; to worship the absolute Self-consciousness is perhaps hardest of all: and if Prayer be understood as only the synonym for exalted thought, it is better to drop the simpler and wholly inadequate name.

Yet, even so, the attempt to make God the equivalent of "the idea which runs through things," though a device which is as old as Plato, is too noble to be either wholly fruitless or wholly false. The irreverent will continue to call it "mysticism," but the term is used in too many ambiguous senses to be a formidable weapon of attack. What is precisely meant by calling a system of philosophy "mystical"? Is it



implied that the system deserts logical procedure? The whole question turns on the meaning of logic, with regard to which Hegelianism has much to say. That the hard divisions of logic are unreal, abstract, never adequate to the fluidity and many-sidedness of things,—of that we are tolerably convinced. That most men are prone to take a narrow practical view, rather than adopt that wide tolerance of thought which grasps many views in an elastic and comprehensive idea,—of that, too, we have had abundant experience. Humanity is a diamond with many facets. As long as the diverse threads of emotional fervour, logical coldness, and imaginative aspiration are worked, as by some magician's hand, into the warp and woof of a single spiritual unit, so long will philosophies of religion be framed, which, whether they seek to make Faith intellectual or Intellect sensational, are yet all endeavouring to do but bare justice to the manifold complexity of Man.





B  
29  
C68

Courtney, William Leonard  
Studies in philosophy

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---



